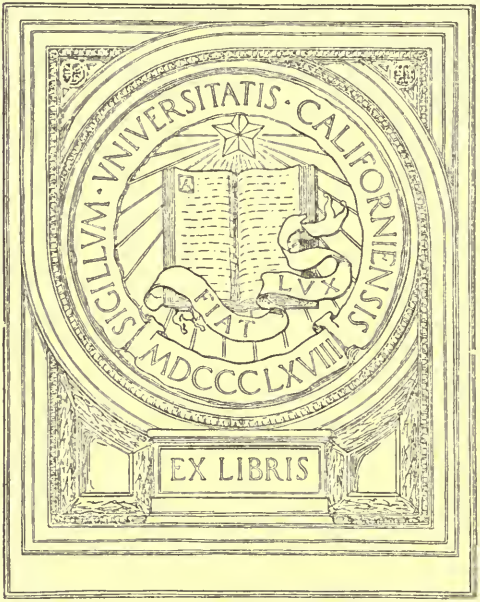
Wee Macgreegor

BY

J. J. Bell

a U

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
AT LOS ANGELES



This book is DUE on the last date stamped below

SOUTHERN BRANCH
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
LIBRARY
LOS ANGELES, CALIF.

Miriam

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

http://www.archive.org/details/weemcgreegor00belliala

Wee Macgreegor

By J. J. Bell

Harper & Brothers Publishers
New York and London

72592

Printed in the United States of America
B-Y

PR
6003
B406W

To

Michael Graham

Glossary

ABIN, above
ABLOW, below
AULD, old
AVA', at all

BA', ball
BASS, a door-mat
BAUN', band
BAWR, a joke, a "lark"
BEGOOD, began
BEW, blue
BLATE, backward, ashamed
BLETHER, a talker (of nonsense)
BREITH, breath
BUITS, boots

CA' (TO), to call
CA' (TO), to drive, to force
CAIM, comb
CAIRRIT, carried
CANNY, careful
CARVIES, sugared caraway-seeds
CHEUCH JEAN, a toffy sweet
CHIEF, friendly, "chummy"
CLAES, clothes
CODE-ILE, cod-liver oil
COUP (TO), to upset
CRACK, conversation

DAUD, lump (also blow)
DAUNER, stroll
DICHT (TO), to wipe
DOO, dove, pigeon
DOOK (TO), to bathe
DOUR, stubborn
DROOKIT, soaked, drenched
DUNT, knock

ERNIN', ironing

FASH (TO), to trouble, to worry
FILE (TO), to soil
FIN (TO), to feel
FIT, foot
FLANNEN, flannel
FOU, full
FRAE, from
FRICHT, fright
FURBYE, also
FURRIT, forward

GAB, mouth
GAR (TO), to induce, to compel
GARTNAVEL, a local asylum
GEMM, game
GIRNY, fractious, complaining
GLAUR, mud
GOONIE, a little gown
GREET (TO), to weep
GRUMPHY, a pig
GUID-SISTER, sister-in-law
GUNDY, candy

HAP (TO), to cover cosily
HAUD (TO), to hold
HAVERS! Nonsense!
HOAST, cough
HURL, ride (in a vehicle)

INTIL, into

JAWBOX, sink
JOOG, jug, mug

KEEK (TO), to peep
KIST, chest
KITLY, tickly

Glossary

LEEVIN', living
LET BUG (TO), to show, to inform
LOUSE (TO), to loosen, to unlace
LUM, chimney

MAUN, must
MUCKLE, much, great, big

NEB, nose, point
NE'ERDAY, New Year's Day
NICK (TO GET THE), to be "run in"
NOCK, clock

OARIN', rowing
OOSE, OOSIE, wool, woolly
OOTBYE, out-of-doors
OWER, over, excessively

PARTINS, crabs
PECHIN', panting
PICKLE (A), a few
POOSHUN, poison
POTTY, putty
PREEN, pin

QUATE, quiet

RID, red

SAIR, sore
SARK, shirt
SATE, seat
SCALE (TO), to spill
SCART (TO), to scratch
SCLATES, slates, scales
SCLIM (TO), to climb
SCOOT (TO), to squirt
SHIN, soon
SHOOGLY, shaky, insecure
SHOOGY-SHOO (TO), to rock
SKELP (TO), to whip
SOOM (TO), to swim
SOOPLE, supple
SPEIR (TO), to inquire
SPELDRON, a small dried fish
STEERIN', restless, energetic
STRACHT, straight
STRAVAYGIN, wandering
STRIPPIT, stripped
SUMPH, a lout
SUREE, soirée
SYNE, ago
SYNE (TO), to wash out
SWEIRT unwilling

TAE, toe
TATE, a small portion
TAURRY-BILER, tar-boiler
TAWPY, a "softy"
TEWKY, a chicken
THOLE (TO), to bear, to endure
THON, yon
TIL, to, unto
TIM (TO), to empty
TOOSIE, untidy
TORRIE, tassel on bonnet
TOSH UP (TO), to tidy up

WAKE, weak
WANNERT, wandered
WAUR, worse
WEAN, child
WHEEN (A), few
WHIT WEY, what way, why
WHUMLE (TO), to roll about
WICE, wise
WINDA-SOLE, window-sill
WULK, whelk
WUR, our

YIN, one
YINST, once

Wee Macgreegor

Wee Macgreegor

I

"MAW!" said the small boy, for the twenty-third time since the Robinson family began their perambulations in Argyll Street—"maw!"

"Whit is't ye're wantin' noo, Macgreegor?" asked his mother, not without irritation in her voice.

"Maw, here a sweetie shope."

"Weel, whit aboot it? Ye'll get yer gundy the morn, ma mannie."

"I want it noo, maw."

"Deed, then, ye'll jist ha'e to want. Ye micht think shame o' yersel', wantin' gundy efter ye've ett twa aipples an' a pie furbye."

"But I'm hungry yet."

This seemed to amuse his mother, for she laughed and called to a big man

in front of her, who was carrying a little girl, "John, Macgreegor's sayin' he's hungry."

"Are ye hungry, Macgreegor?" said John, halting and turning to his son, with a twinkle in his eye. "Ye'll be wantin' a scone, maybe."

Macgregor looked offended, and his mother remarked, "No' him! It's thae sweetie shopes that's makin' him hungry. But I've tell't him he's to get nae gundy till the morn's mornin'."

"D'ye hear whit she's sayin', Macgreegor?" said his father. Then, suddenly, "Come on, Lizzie, an' we'll get him a bit sweetie to taste his gab."

"Ye jist spile the wean, John," said Lizzie, moving, however, with a good-natured smile to the shop-window. "But mind, it's to be baurley-sugar. I'll no ha'e him filin' his stomach wi' fancy things. See an' get baurley-sugar, John, an' wee Jeannie 'll get a bit o' 't. Wull ye no', ma daurlin'?" she demanded sweetly of the child in her husband's arms. Wee Jeannie expressed delight in sounds unintelligible to any one but her mother.

"I want taiblet," said Macgregor to his father, in a whisper rendered hoarse with emotion at the sight of the good things in the window.

His mother was not intended to hear him, but she did. "Taiblet!" she exclaimed. "Weans that gets taiblet gets ile efter."

The boy's nether lip protruded and trembled ominously.

"Och, Lizzie," said John, "ye're aye thinkin' aboot the future. A wee bit taiblet 'll dae the laddie nae hairm. Deed, no! An' fine I ken ye like a bit taiblet yersel'."

"Ay, that's a' richt, John. But ye've shairly no' forgot whit the doctor said when Macgreegor wis lyin' badly efter ye had him at the Exhibeetion. He said Macgreegor had a wake disgeestion, and we wis to be awfu' carefu' whit he ett. An' I wis readin' in the *Companion* jist the ither nicht that there wis naethin' waur fur the disgeestion nor nits, an' thon taiblet's jist fu' o' nits."

"Aweel," said her husband, evidently overcome by her reasoning, "I'll get

baurley-sugar. Haud wee Jeannie." And he entered the shop.

When he rejoined his family, he handed the "wholesome sweetmeat" to his wife, who first of all extracted a short stick for wee Jeannie, wrapping one end of it in a scrap of paper torn from the "poke." Macgregor accepted his share in gloomy silence, and presently the party resumed their walk, John again carrying his daughter, who from time to time dabbed his countenance with the wet end of her barley-sugar in a filial desire to give him a taste.

Having proceeded west about one hundred yards, they were called to a halt by Lizzie at the door of a big warehouse.

"I'm gaun in here, John," she said. "I'm wantin' a bit rid flannen fur a goonie fur wee Jeannie."

"Naethin' fur yersel', Lizzie?"

His wife looked at something in one of the windows rather wistfully. "It's ower dear," she murmured.

"It's no' that dear," said John, thoughtfully.

"Weel, it's guid stuff. But I'm gey sweirt to pey sae muckle fur whit I micht dae wi'oot. An' Macgreegor's needin' a new bunnet."

"His bunnet's fine. Jis you gang in, Lizzie, an' buy whit ye've got yer e'e on. We'll see aboot a bunnet efter. Dod! ye maun ha'e yer Ne'rday, wumman, like ither folk. Awa' wi' ye!"

"I'll tak' wee Jeannie in wi' me," said Lizzie, looking pleased. "I'm shair yer airm's sair wi' haudin' her. She's gettin' a big lassie—are ye no', ma doo?" She stepped into the doorway, but returned for a moment. "See an' keep a grup o' Macgreegor, John," she said.

"Oh, ay! Him an' me 'll jist tak' a bit daunner up an' doon till ye come oot." Having wiped from his face the sticky traces of his daughter's affection, and set his pipe going with several long breaths of satisfaction, he held out his hand to his son, with "Come on, Macgreegor."

Macgregor slipped his small fist into the big one, and they set off slowly along the crowded pavements, stopping frequently to see the sights of the street

and the windows, while the youngster asked innumerable questions, mostly unanswerable.

"Ha'e ye ett yer baurley-sugar?" asked his father, during a pause in the childish queries.

"Ay; I've ett it. . . . It's no' as nice as taiblet, paw."

"But ye'll no' be carin' fur taiblet noo?"

"Taiblet's awfu' guid," returned Macgregor, guardedly, with a glance upward at his parent's face. "Wullie Thomson's paw gi'es him taiblet whiles."

"Aweel, Macgreegor, I'm no' gaun to gi'e ye taiblet. . . . But if ye wis pittin' yer haun' in ma pooch ye micht— Ye're no' to let on to yer maw, mind!"

The enraptured Macgregor's hand was already busy, and a moment later his jaws were likewise.

"Ye've burst the poke, ye rogue," said John, feeling in his pocket. "Noo, ye're to get nae mair till the morn. Yer maw wud gi'e 't to me if she kent ye wis eatin' awmonds."

"I'll no' tell," said Macgregor, generously.

As they approached the warehouse once more, John carefully wiped his son's mouth, and vainly endeavored to assume an expression of innocence.

However, when Lizzie joined them she was too pleased and proud for the moment to suspect anything.

"Gi'e Jeannie to me," said John.

"Na, na; I'll cairry her a wee. I got a sate in the shope. But I'll gi'e ye ma paircel. It 'll maybe gang in yer poket."

"Jist," said her husband, as he stuffed in the long, brown-paper package. "Did ye get whit ye wantit?"

"Ay, John, an' I bate them doon a shullin'."

"Ye're a rale smairt wumman! Come, an' we'll gang an' see the waux-works."

"Paw," put in Macgregor, "I wudna like to be a waux-work when I wis deid."

"Haud yer tongue, Macgreegor," said his mother. "John, ye maun check him when he says sic awfu' things."

"Aw, the wean's fine, Lizzie. . . . Macgreegor, ye're no' to say that again," he added, with an attempt at solemnity.

"Whit wey is folk made intil waux-works?" inquired his son, not greatly abashed.

"Oh, jist to amuse ither folk."

"But whit wey—" Macgregor's inquiry was interrupted by his colliding violently with a bag carried by a gentleman hurrying for his train.

"Ye see whit ye get fur no' lukin' whaur ye're gaun," said his mother. "Pit his bunnet stracht, John. . . . Puir mannie, it wis a gey sair dunt," she added, gently.

"I'm no' greetin', maw," said Macgregor, in a quavering voice, rubbing his eyes with his cuff.

"That's a braw lad!" said Lizzie.

"Never heed, Macgreegor! Ye'll be a man afore yer mither!" said John.

Thus consoled, the boy trotted on with his parents till they reached the gaudy entrance of the wax-works.

"Noo, I'll tak' Jeannie," said the husband.

"Ay; that 'll be the best wey fur gaun in. An' I'll tak' the paircel, fur it 'll be in yer road." So saying, Lizzie handed her charge to John. Then she pulled

the parcel from his pocket; and lo and behold! it came out accompanied by sundry fragments of taiblet, which fell on the pavement.

John would have dropped anything else but his present burden. Macgregor gazed at the dainties at his feet, but did not dare attempt to secure them. Lizzie looked pitilessly from one to the other. It was a tableau worthy of wax.

But who can follow the workings of the childish mind? Two tears crept into Macgregor's eyes as he raised them fearfully to his mother's face.

"Paw never ett ony," he mumbled.

The expression on Lizzie's face changed to astonishment.

"Whit's that ye say?"

"P-p-paw never ett ony," the boy repeated.

And then, of a sudden, Lizzie's astonishment became amusement.

"Deed, ye're jist a pair o' weans!" And she laughed against her will.

"It wis a' ma fau't, Lizzie," said John.

"Ay; ye sud ha'e pit the taiblet in yer ither pocket! Eh? . . . Na, na, Mac-

greegor, ye'll jist let the taiblet lie," she exclaimed as the boy stooped to seize it.

"There nae glaur on it, maw."

"Ay, but there is. Come awa'!"

And away Macgregor was pulled to see the wax-works.

But why did paw wink at his son and point stealthily to his "pooch"?

II

"PAW," said Macgregor, as the family party turned out of Sauchiehall Street into Cambridge Street—"paw, whit wey dae they ca' it the Zoo?"

"Deed, Macgreegor, ye bate me there," returned his father. "Lizzie," he said to his wife, "Macgreegor's speirin' whit wey they ca' it the Zoo."

"Macgreegor's aye speirin'," said Lizzie. "If they didna ca' it the Zoo, whit wud they ca' it?"

"Weel, that's true," observed her husband. "But it's a queer word, Zoo; an' the mair ye think o' 't the queerer it gets. I mind I yinst—"

"Paw, wull we shin be there?" inquired his son, whose philological craving was apparently neither very severe nor lasting.

"Ay, ye'll be there in a meenit. Lizzie, are ye shair it's a' richt aboot takin' wee Jeannie in to see the beasts? I doot she'll be frichtit."

"Frichtit? Nae fear, John! Wee Jeannie's no' that easy frichtit. Losh me! When the meenister wis in the hoose on Wensday, wee Jeannie wisna a bit feart—wis ye, ma doo? She jist laucht til him, an' played dab at his e'e wi' the leg o' her auld jumpin'-jake. Mr. Broon wis fair divertit, an' gi'ed her yin o' his cough lozengers. Na, na, John; she's no' that easy frichtit."

"Aweel, ye ken best, Lizzie. See, gi'e her to me."

"Oh, I'll haud her till we get inside. She'll shin be walkin' her lanesome—wull ye no', honey? Jist keep a grup o' Macgreegor, John, or he'll be fleein' awa' an' gettin' rin ower or wannert."

"Paw," said Macgregor, "I see the Zoo."

"Ay, thon's hit. Ye never see wild beasts afore, Macgreegor?"

"I near seen wild beasts in the shows at the Lairgs, paw."

"Aw, ay; ye wis bidin' wi' yer aunt Purdie then. She wud be feart to gang in whaur the beasts wis."

"Aunt Purdie's an auld footer," said Macgregor.

"Whisht, whisht!" interposed his mother. "Ye're no' to speak that wey aboot yer aunt Purdie. She's a rale dacent wumman. . . . John, ye sudna lauch at Macgreegor's talk; ye jist mak' him think he's smairt."

"Aw, the wean's fine, Lizzie. Weel, we'll get across the road noo."

"Whit wey—" began the boy.

"Macgreegor, tak' yer paw's haun'. I'm no' wantin' ye to be catched wi' yin o' thae electric-caurs," said his mother.

The street was crossed without mishap, and presently the quartet found themselves within the Zoo. For a couple of minutes, perhaps, they paused on the threshold, uncertain which direction to take. Then the announcement made by an official in a loud voice to the effect that a performance by the lions and tigers was about to take place on the west side of the building sent them hurrying thither with the crowd, Macgregor for once in his life being too overcome for speech.

Beyond sundry ejaculations, little conversation took place while the trainer

exhibited his pluck and wonderful command over the brutes; and it might have been observed that Macgregor never once made the slightest attempt to withdraw his fingers from the fatherly clasp.

"Mercy me! It's maist wunnerfu'!" exclaimed Lizzie, when it was all over.

"Dod, it bates a'!" said John, as he took wee Jeannie from her arms.

And a small voice at his side whispered, hoarsely, "I wisna feart, paw!"

"Macgreegor's sayin' he wisna feart, Lizzie," said John to his wife.

"Maybe he wisna," returned Lizzie, "but I can tell ye I wis a' shakin' when thae muckle brits wis loupin' aboot the man. I wis wunnerin' whit I wud dae wi' wee Jeannie if ony o' the beasts wun oot the cages an' commenced fur to pu' the heids an' legs aff the folk."

"Och, wumman, there's nae fear o' that."

"If a beast wis gaun fur to pu' ma heid aff," remarked Macgregor, who had grown suddenly bold, "I—I—I wud—I wud gi'e 't a kick!"

"Ye're the boy!" said his father.

"Ye sudna let him boast like that, John," said Lizzie, reprovingly.

"Whit wud ye dae, Macgreegor," asked John, with a grin, "if a beast wis efter yer maw?"

"I — I — wud pu' its tail," replied the valiant Macgregor. "And then I wud—" A loud roar from one of the lions interrupted him and caused him to clutch at his parent.

"Aw, Macgreegor," said his mother, "I doot ye wud jist rin awa' an' leave yer maw to be ett."

The boy's under-lip trembled. "I wudna dae that, maw," he said, solemnly.

"Wud ye no', ma dearie?" said Lizzie, her voice softening. "Weel, weel, we'll say nae mair aboot it. Whit's yer paw an' wee Jeannie efter noo?"

"It's an ephelant, maw," said Macgregor, as they overtook the father and daughter, who were admiring the stuffed carcass of a huge elephant.

"He's no leevin'," John explained. "He's the yin that had to be shot a while syne."

"Whit wey wis he shot, paw?"

"He wis dangerous."

"Whit wey wis he dangerous?"

"I'm no' jist shair, but a man yinst tell't me the beast wis trampin' on his keepers, an' eatin' the bunnets aff the folk's heids."

"Paw, whit's thon big white oosie beast?"

"Thon yin? Dae ye ken, Lizzie?"

"I've seen picturs like it, John. It's a—oh, ay, it's a Polish bear."

"Dod, ay! It wud gey shin polish aff you an' me, wumman," said John, laughing heartily.

"Dod, ay!" echoed Macgregor.

"Ye're no' to say that," said Lizzie.

"Whit, maw?"

"Ye're no' to say 'dod.'"

"Paw says it, maw."

"Weel, yer paw sudna say 't."

"Whit wey, maw?"

"Ha'e, Lizzie," said John, handing his wife a catalogue which he had just purchased, "that 'll tell ye the names o' the beasts. Whit dae they ca' thon strippit—"

"Maw, whit's the name o' thon spotit yin?" cried Macgregor.

"They're baith Hyaenies," replied Lizzie, after consulting the numbers on the cages and the booklet. "Thon big black beast wi' the awfu' tae-nils is the Aswail or Sloth Bear."

"Ay, it's jist Aswail it's in its cage," remarked her husband, with a chuckle.

"My! ye're rale smairt the day, John, wi' yer bit jokes. But whaur's Macgreegor?"

The youngster was discovered, after some search, at the other side of the building, gazing with an expression of awe at a couple of camels.

"Paw, the wee yin's face is unco like Aunt Purdie," he observed.

His father guffawed.

His mother frowned. "John, I've tell't ye afore no' to lauch when Macgreegor says impident things. I wunner at ye!"

"But, Lizzie, I cudna help it this time. Dod, I thocht it wis gey like yer brither's guidwife masel'!"

"John!"

"As shair's daith! It's jist the face she pits on when she's comin' oot the kirk on a wat Sawbath."

"Weel, she canna help her face, puir thing!" said Lizzie.

"I never cud unnerstaun' hoo yer brither Rubbert cud mairry sic an auld bogle, an' him wi' sic a braw sister."

"Hoots, John! Ye're fair aff at the nail the day!" said Lizzie, trying not to smile.

"Paw, whit wey ha'e the caymels nae trunks like the ephelants?"

"Macgreegor," remarked Lizzie, "ye wud turn Solyman hissel' dementit! Jist luk at the humphs on their backs, an' dinna fash yer—"

"Paw, whit wey ha'e the caymels got humphs?"

"Man, ye're a fair divert, Macgreegor," said John. "Maybe it's because they ha'e nae trunks. See, there's a penny fur ye. Awa' to the stall ower thonder, an' get a wheen biscuits fur the beasts."

"I'm gaun to feed the ephelants," Macgregor announced on his return.

"That's richt! See, there the big yin haudin' oot his trunk. . . . Dod, a biscuit's naethin' to him. Gi'e yin to wee Jeannie an' she'll feed the ither yin."

"Is the ephelant's trunk jist the same as a man's neb, paw?" inquired Macgregor.

"Ay, jist the same."

"Whit wey dae folk no' pick up things wi' their nebs, paw?"

"Aw, haud yer tongue, Macgreegor," said his mother. "John, bring wee Jeannie ower to see the paurrits."

The birds having been duly admired and commented upon, Macgregor was again discovered to be missing. This time he was found engaged in making faces at a family of monkeys.

"Come awa' frae the nesty things!" cried Lizzie. "I canna thole monkeys, John. Whit 'll thon beast be in the watter?"

"The number's wan-twinty-nine."

"Oh, ay. Common Seal, frae the German Ocean. Ah, but that 'll be the wee yin. The big yin's a Californian Sea Lion. Macgreegor, here's a sea lion!"

"It's no vera like a lion, maw. . . . I see its whuskers! Whit wey has it nae oose on its feet?"

"Thae things isna feet. Thae's fins."

"Whit wey has it nae oose on its fins, paw?"

"Maybe it cudna soom wi' oose on its fins."

"Whit wey cud it no' soom wi' oose on—"

"Come awa' an' see this extraornar beast, Macgreegor," said Lizzie. "The book says it's ca'ed a tapir."

"Whit wey is 't ca'ed a tapir, maw?"

"Gi'e 't a bit biscuit," returned his mother, evasively. "Puir beastie, it's lukin' gey doon i' the mooth, is 't no, John?"

"It's a' that. But I wid be doon i' the mooth, masel', Lizzie, wi' a neb like that on me. See an' no' let it nip yer fingers, Macgreegor."

"Whit wey is its neb sae shoogly, paw?"

"Dod, Macgreegor, I'm thinkin' it kens ye. It's wagglin' its neb at ye fur anither bit biscuit."

"John," said his wife, "I'll tak' wee Jeannie an' ha'e a sate fur a wee."

"Are ye wearit? Wud ye no' like a dish o' tea?"

"Och, I'm no' needin' tea, John."

"Plenty folk tak' tea when they're no' needin' it. Come on, Lizzie!"

Lizzie shook her head and muttered something about "gentry" and "wastry."

"I—I got a rise in ma pey the day, Lizzie," said her husband, suddenly.

"Did ye that, John?"

"Ay! Hauf-a-croon."

"Deed, I wis thinkin' it wis mair nor naethin' that wis makin' ye sae jokey-like," said Lizzie, with a laugh.

"Come on, then, Lizzie. Here, Macgreegor!"

"Paw, whit wey—"

"Aw, ye'll see the beasts again in a wee. Cud ye eat a pie?"

Macgregor drew a long breath. "Cud I no'?" he exclaimed, beaming.

III

THE Robinsons were on their way to tea at Aunt Purdie's, and the anxious Lizzie was counselling her son regarding his behavior at the table of that excellent lady.

"Noo, Macgreegor," she said, "ye're no' to affront me. Yer aunt Purdie's rale genteel, an' awful easy offendit."

"Dod, ay!" said John, "ye'll ha'e to mind yer Q.P.'s the day, as the sayin' is."

"Dod, ay!" said Macgregor.

"I've tell 't ye dizzens o' times, Macgreegor, ye're no' to say that," said his mother.

"I furgot, maw."

"If yer aunt Purdie wis hearin' ye speak that wey she wud be sair pit oot. An', John," turning to her husband, "ye sud be mair carefu' whit ye say afore the wean. He's jist like a paurrit fur pickin' up words."

"Dod, ay!" said John, seriously, "I'll ha'e to be carefu', Lizzie."

"Ye're an awfu' man," said his wife, frowning and smiling.

"Wull I get a tert at Aunt Purdie's?" inquired Macgregor.

"Ye'll see whit ye'll get when ye get it," replied his mother. "An' mind, Macgreegor, ye're no' to be askin' fur jeely till ye've ett twa bits o' breed-an'-butter. It's no' mainners; an' yer aunt Purdie's rale parteeclar. An' yer no' to dicht yer mooth wi' yer cuff—mind that. Ye're to tak' yer hanky an' let on ye're jist gi'ein' yer nib a bit wipe. An' ye're no' to scale yer tea nor sup the sugar if ony's left in yer cup when ye're dune drinkin'. An' if ye drap yer piece on the floor, ye're no' to gang efter it; ye're jist to let on ye've ett it. An' ye're no'—"

"Deed, Lizzie," interposed her husband, "ye're the yin to think aboot things!"

"Weel, John, if I dinna tell Macgreegor hoo to behave hissel', he'll affront me. It's maybe a sma' maitter to a man, John, but a wumman disna

like to be pit oot afore her guid sister. An', John, ye're to try an' be discreet yersel', an' think afore ye mak' a bit joke, fur she's a rale genteel wumman, an' awfu' easy offendit."

"But yer brither likes a lauch, Lizzie."

"Ay, Rubbert's a herty man; but a' the same, John, ye're no' to gar him lauch abin his breith. An' yer no' to lauch yersel' if Macgreegor tries to be smairt."

"A' richt, Lizzie," said her husband, good-humoredly. "Dod, I'm thinkin' ye're jist aboot as feart fur me as fur the wean."

"Havers, John! I'm no' finnin' fau't wi' you. It's jist that ye whiles furget yer—"

"Ma Q.P.'s."

"Ay, ye're Q.P.'s, as ye ca' it. I aye thocht Q.P.'s wis a kin' o' fit-ba'."

Her husband was about to explain when Macgregor exclaimed that Aunt Purdie's dwelling was in sight.

"Ay, it's the third close," remarked John, proceeding to plug his pipe with a scrap of newspaper. After that he pulled up his collar, tightened his tie,

cocked his hat a little over one eye, winked at his wife, and chucked wee Jeannie under the chin.

"I wud just as shin be at hame, Lizzie," he observed, as they turned into the close.

"Whisht, John! Mrs. Purdie's a rale dacent wumman, an'—an' we needna wait ower lang. See if ye can gi'e Macgreegor's hair a bit tosh up. It's awfu' ill to lie. . . . Noo, John, ye'll gang furrit an' ring the bell. Mind, ye're to speir if Mrs. Purdie is in afore ye gang ower the doorstep."

"But she wudna ha'e askit us to wur tea if she had been fur gaun oot," said John.

"Tits, man! Mrs. Purdie keeps a wee servant lass, an' ye maun speir at her if her mistress is in. Mind, yer no' to say 'it's a fine day,' or onythin' like that; ye're jist to speir if Mrs. Purdie's in. D 'ye see?"

"Weel, weel, wumman, onythin' fur peace." And John pulled the bell-handle. "I ken she's in," he whispered. "I hear her roarin' at somebody."

"Sh! John. Jist dae whit I tell 't ye."

The door was opened and John bashfully repeated the formula.

"Will you please step in?" said the domestic, a small, rosy-cheeked girl, who still showed her ankles though she had put her hair up.

"Dicht yer feet, Macgreegor, dicht yer feet," said Lizzie, in a quick, loud whisper. "See, dicht them on the bass."

Macgregor obeyed with great vigor, and followed the others into the lobby.

"Paw, we've a brawer nock nor that yin," he remarked, in a husky undertone, pointing at a grandfather's clock in a corner.

"Whisht!" said his mother, nervously.

"Wull I pit ma bunnet in ma pooch, maw?" asked the boy.

"Na, na! John, pit his bunnet up aside yer ain."

Just then Mrs. Purdie appeared and bade them welcome; and presently they were gathered in the parlor, the table of which was already laid for tea. Mr. Purdie was getting on well in the world—his grocery establishment was gaining new customers daily— and Mrs. Purdie was inclined, alas! to look down

on her homely relatives, and to regard their manners and speech as vulgar, with the result that her own manners were frequently affected, while her speech was sometimes a strange mixture.

"And how are you to-day, Macgregor?" she asked the boy as they sat round the fire.

"I'm fine," replied Macgregor, glancing at the good things on the table.

"Fine what?" said Aunt Purdie.

"Ye sud say, 'Fine, thenk ye,'" whispered his mother, giving him a nudge.

"Fine, thenk ye," said Macgregor, obediently. "I wis at the Zoo."

"Oh, indeed. And what did you see at the Zoo?"

"Beasts, thenk ye," said Macgregor.

"An' hoo's Rubbert?" asked Lizzie, with some haste.

"Robert is keeping well, thank you; but he's sorry he cannot leave the shop this evening. His young man was unfortunately rin over by an electric-caur yesterday."

"Oh, thae caurs!" said Lizzie. "I'm aye feart fur Macgreegor gettin' catched, an' comin' hame wantin' a leg."

"Robert's young man got conclusion of the brain," said Aunt Purdie, with great solemnity. "He was carrying a dizzen of eggs an' a pun' of the best ham when the melancholy accident occurred."

"Dae ye tell me that?" exclaimed Lizzie. "An' wis the eggs a' broke?"

"With two exceptions." And Aunt Purdie went on to describe the accident in detail to Lizzie, while John and Macgregor looked out of the window, and wee Jeannie, who had been put on the floor to "play herself," found amusement in pulling to pieces a half-knitted stocking which she discovered in a basket under the sofa.

Soon the little, rosy-cheeked maid entered with the teapot, and they all took their places at table, wee Jeannie being lifted on to her mother's knee and warned not to touch the knife.

"Mr. Robison," said Aunt Purdie, looking very hard at John, "kindly ask a blessing."

John turned red and mumbled something, at the end of which he wiped his brow and loudly blew his nose.

The hostess, after looking for a moment as if she thought it rather an inferior "blessing," commenced her duties.

"I'm no' wantin' a joog, maw," said Macgregor to his mother, as he observed Aunt Purdie filling a mug with milk and hot water.

"It's fur wee Jeannie," whispered Lizzie. "But ye're jist to tak' whit ye get."

Conversation flagged for the first five minutes. Then Mrs. Purdie broke the silence.

"Have you been going out much this winter, Mr. Robison?" she inquired, in her best style.

For an instant John gaped. "Dod, Mrs. Purdie, I'm gled to say I've no' been aff ma work a day since the New Year."

"I mean out to entertainments, parties, and conversonies," said Mrs. Purdie, with a pitying smile.

"Oh, ay. Aweel, Lizzie an' me likes the fireside, but we've been to the Zoo an' the pantymine an' twa-three surees."

"I like surees," observed Macgregor, digging into a pot of jam. By a strange

mischance he had already dropped two pieces of plain bread-and-butter on the floor, but to his credit it must be recorded that he had remembered his mother's injunction not to attempt to recover them.

"Ay, Macgreegor's the yin fur surees," said John. "He cam' hame frae the Sawbath-schule suree the ither nicht wi' fower orangers an' guid kens hoo mony pokes o' sweeties."

"An' he had to get ile i' the mornin'," said Lizzie, whose time was chiefly occupied in feeding wee Jeannie.

"Do you like oil?" said Mrs. Purdie, smiling sourly at Macgregor.

"Naw," returned the boy, with his mouth full. "Dae you like ile, Aunt Purdie?"

"Whisht!" said his mother, reprovingly.

"Assist yourself to a cookie, Mr. Robison," said Mrs. Purdie, a trifle confused. "And pass your cup. Mrs. Robison, is your tea out?"

"Thenk ye," said Lizzie. "This is rale nice cake, Mrs. Purdie."

"It was recommended to me by

Mrs. M'Cluny, the doctor's wife. Mrs. M'Cluny is very highly connected, quite autocratic, in fact. Her and me is great friends. I expect to meet her at the Carmunnock conversonie on Monday night—a very select gathering. Her an' me—"

"Paw, I want a tert."

"Na, John," said Lizzie, "he's had yin."

"I want anither, maw."

"Ye canna ha'e anither, Macgreegor. Weel, Mrs. Purdie, ye wis sayin'—"

"I was observing—"

"Paw, gi'e 's a curran'-cake," said Macgregor, in a whisper.

John winked at his son, and stealthily moved the dish of dainties in his direction.

The two ladies were discussing the coming "conversonie," and appeared oblivious to what was going on. The plate came nearer and nearer, and at last Macgregor's eager paw went cautiously towards it. The currant-cake was secured, but as the boy drew back his hand his mother detected him.

"Macgreegor!" she exclaimed.

The hapless youngster started guiltily. Over went the jam-pot, spreading its contents on the cloth; over went Macgregor's teacup, which was smashed to atoms on the floor. Wee Jeannie, with a gurgle of delight, evidently under the impression that something in the way of entertainment was expected of her, tipped her mug after the cup, while her father, rising in confusion, sent a plate and five cookies to swell the wreckage.

John stood helpless; Lizzie sat speechless and pale; wee Jeannie, discovering that it wasn't a joke, after all, set up a dismal wailing; and Macgregor, with quivering lip and misty eye, stared at the ruin he had wrought. No one dared to look at Aunt Purdie. Her expression was grim—very grim, indeed. When she did speak, her words were few but incisive. They had reference to the bringing-up of children, of which, she thanked Providence, she had none. Poor Lizzie apologized for her son, expressed herself "fair affrontit" at his conduct, and declared that she would "sort" him when they got home. The

hour following tea was an uncomfortable one, and John did not conceal his relief at being out of the house.

"She'll no' ask us back," he observed.

Lizzie said nothing.

"Macgreegor's sayin' he's gey an' sorry," said John, presently.

"Muckle need," muttered Lizzie.

"He's sayin' he'll tak' ile if ye like," went on her husband.

"He'll get mair nor ile!"

"Aw, wumman, the wean cudna help it. It wis a' an accident. Let him aff this time, Lizzie. I broke a plate masel', ye ken, an' wee Jeannie broke a joog. Are we a' to get ile an'—an' the ither thing, dearie?" . . .

"Och, John, ye aye get ower me."

And so peace reigned again.

Ten minutes later John noticed that Macgregor was lagging behind. He went back a couple of steps and took his son's hand.

"Whit's that ye're pittin' in yer gab, Macgreegor?" he asked, suddenly.

Macgregor drew something from his pocket. "I'll gi'e ye a bit, paw," he said, generously. "It's a curran'-cake."

IV

"JIST ye gang oot an' dae yer messages, Lizzie, an' I'll mind Macgreegor," said John, when he had finished his tea.

"Ye'll no' let him speak, John," said Lizzie, rising and beginning to remove the dishes from the table to the jaw-box with as little noise as possible. "Ye ken he didna sleep a wink a' nicht, an' he had jist a wee doze at denner-time. He's needin' a guid sleep, puir mannie, sae ye maun keep him as quate 's ye can, John." Husband and wife talked in whispers.

"Dae ye think he's better the nicht?" asked the former, anxiously.

"Oh, ay; I ken he's a bit better, but he's no' near ready fur the turkey's egg ye brocht hame the day, John."

"I thocht it micht gi'e him strength, Lizzie."

"Deed, ay. But, ye see, his inside's

ower wake yet. He'll get the egg as shin as he can disgeest it."

"Ay," said John, agreeably, but looking disappointed.

"Ye hivna ony sweeties in yer pooch?" said Lizzie, suddenly and interrogatively, glancing at him as she dried a saucer.

John pretended he did not hear, and his wife repeated the question quietly but firmly.

"Och, jist a wheen joojoobs, wumman," he replied, at last.

"Aweel, John, I'll jist tak' chairge o' them till the wean's ready fur sweeties."

"I'll no' gi'e Macgreegor ony the nicht, Lizzie," he said, looking uncomfortable.

"I ken that."

"Tak' them oot o' ma pooch," said John, smiling ruefully, and pointing to his jacket hung behind the door.

"Tak' them oot yersel'," returned his wife, "an' pit them in the wee drawer in the dresser."

"Ye're an awfu' wumman!"

"Ye're an awfu' man!"

"Maybe ye're richt."

"Weel, John, ye've plenty o' whit they ca' common-sense in maist things, but ye're jist a wean aboot Macgreegor," said Lizzie.

"Ay," said John, humbly.

"An' I've got to keep an e'e on ye, dearie," she added, more gently. "Noo, I'm dependin' on ye to keep Macgreegor quate," she said, a little later. "I'll no' be lang. An' I'll get wee Jeannie on ma wey back. It wis rale kind o' Mrs. Thomson to tak' the wean the day, fur she's gettin' a steerin' lassie, an' wudna unnerstaun' that Macgreegor wis lyin' badly."

Presently Lizzie, after bending for a minute over the bed where the small patient lay, prepared to leave the house. "He's sleepin', John," she said, with a pleased smile.

Left to himself, John smoked his pipe before the fire and meditated. Two minutes passed, and then—

"Paw!"

"Are ye waukin', Macgreegor?" John sprang up, laid down his pipe, and went to the bedside.

"Paw, whit wey am I no' to get a joojoob?"

"Aw—weel, ye see, it wudna be guid fur yer inside."

"But ma heid's sair, paw."

"Yer maw said I wisna to let ye speak. Whisht noo, ma wee man, an' try an' gang to sleep."

"I canna sleep. Ma heid's sair. I want a joojoob."

John stroked his son's head and patted his shoulder tenderly. "Puir laddie, wud ye like a drink?"

"I want a joojoob, paw."

Somehow the man's eye, leaving the boy for a moment, roved round the kitchen. The wee drawer in the dresser had been left partly open.

"I canna sleep. I want a joojoob," said Macgregor again.

John sighed. He gazed longingly at the wee drawer. Then he pulled himself together and looked back at his son. "Ye canna get a joojoob, ma wee man," he said, sadly. "Wull I tell ye a story?" he asked, almost despairingly.

"Ay," replied the patient, without much enthusiasm. "I want a—"

"Whit 'll I tell ye?" inquired the father, hastily. "Aboot a draygon?"

72332

"Ay," languidly assented Macgregor. "Tell's aboot a draygon, and gi'e 's a—"

"There wis yinst a draygon," began John, without delay, "an' it leeved in a den."

"Hoo big wis the draygon, paw?" inquired Macgregor, with faint interest.

"It wis bigger nor the biggest beast ye seen in the Zoo. An' it wis a' covered wi' sclates, an' fire an' reek cam' oot its mooth, an' when folk wis gaun by its den it played puff! puff! at them, an' roastit them wi' its breith, an' then it ett them."

"Whit wey did the folk no' scoot watter at it, paw?"

"Dod, Macgreegor, ye may weel speir that. But, ye see, the folk didna scoot watter; an' at last the king o' the place begood to get feart he wud ha'e nae folk left to pey him taxes an' cry 'hurray!' when he gaed ootbye, an' he got dizzens o' bills prentit an' pastit up a' through the toon tellin' the folk that he would gi'e hauf his riches an' the haun' o' his bewtiful dochter til the man that killt the draygon. An' then a lot o' young lauds said they wud kill the monster or

dee in the attemp'; an' they dee'd, an' wis ett up."

"Whit wey did they no' shoot the draygon, paw?" asked Macgregor, with some animation.

"Aw, ye see, guns wisna inventit."

"Ay. Whit else, paw?"

"Keep yersel' ablow the claes, ma mannie. Weel, efter hunners o' fine braw lauds wis roastit an' ett up, there wis a young fairmer cam' furrit, an' said he wis gaun to ha'e a try. An' the folk lauched at him, fur the lauds that wis ett up wis a' rale sojers that kent hoo to fecht. But the young fairmer didna tak' the huff. He jist askit fur a sword an' a shield, an' when he got them he gaed awa' hame to his tea, singin' wi' a licht hert. Fur, ye see, he had made a plan. An' i' the mornin' he got the-gither a' his coos an' sheeps an' hens an' jucks, an' chased them a' doon to the draygon's den. An' the draygon wis awfu' hungry that mornin', fur it hadna ett ony braw lauds fur near a week; an' when it seen the coos an' sheeps an' hens an' jucks comin', it lickit its lips, an' cam' oot its den, an' played puff!

puff! an' roastit them a', an' ett them up. An' when it wis feenished it wis jist as fou's a wulk, an' it warstled intil its den to ha'e a bit nap. It hadna been sleepin' lang afore it wis waukened wi' the young fairmer cryin': 'Come oot, ye auld draygon! Come oot till I stab ye!' It never let bug it heard him speakin', an' in a wee while the young fairmer keekit intil the den an' gi'ed it a gey sair jag i' the e'e wi' his sword. An' then—"

"Did he pit oot its e'e, paw?"

"No' exac'ly, but it wis a gey sair jag. An' then it begood to play puff! puff! at the young fairmer, but it wis unco short o' breith efter eatin' a' the coos an' sheeps an' hens an' jucks. An' the young fairmer kep' awa' the fire and reek wi' his shield an' gi'ed the draygon a jag in its ither e'e, an' cried: 'Come oot, ye auld taurry-biler till I ca' the heid aff ye!' Wi' that the draygon, no' likin' to be ca'ed an auld taurry-biler, let oot a roar, an' tried fur to catch the young fairmer. But it wis jist as fou's a wulk, an' hauf-blin' furbye, an' as shin as it pit its heid oot the den the

young fairmer stud up on his taes an' brocht doon the sword wi' a' his micht, an' cut aff the draygon's heid, an' the draygon wis deid. An' then—"

"Wis it bleedin', paw?" asked Macgregor, eagerly.

"Dod, ay! An' then the young fairmer got hauf the king's riches an' mairrit his dochter, an' wis happy ever efter. An' that's a' aboot the draygon."

"Tell 's anither story, paw."

John told two more stories, and at the end of the second Macgregor said:

"I likit the draygon best. I want to be cairrit noo."

"Na, na, I daurna tak' ye oot yer bed."

"Hap me weel, an' cairry me, paw," said the boy.

Eventually his father gave in, rolled him in a blanket, and began to pace the kitchen floor.

"Mairch!" commanded Macgregor. "An' whustle tae," he added; "whustle like a baun'!"

John obligingly began to whistle "The Girl I Left Behind Me," and marched up and down the kitchen till Macgregor expressed himself satisfied.

"Sing noo, paw."

"Is yer heid no' bad?"

"No' sae bad as it wis. Sing, paw!"

"Vera weel," said John, sitting down with his burden at the fireside.

"I want to see ootbye," said the burden.

So John went over to the window, and they looked into the street below, where the lamps were being lit.

"Leerie, leerie, licht the lamps,
Lang legs an' crookit shanks,"

sang John, softly.

Then:

"I had a little powny,
Its name wis Dapple Grey.
I lent it til a leddy
To ride a mile away.
She whuppit it, she lashed it,
She ca'ed it through the mire—
I'll never lend my powny
Fur ony leddy's hire!"

"Sing anither," said Macgregor.

"Wee Jokey-Birdy, tol-lol-lol,
Laid an egg on the winda-sole.
The winda-sole begood to crack—
Wee Jokey-Birdy roared an' grat."

"Sing anither," said Macgregor.

John sang another half-dozen rhymes, and then Macgregor expressed himself willing to leave the window for the fireside. "Sing 'A wee bird cam',' paw," he murmured, putting his arm a little further round his father's neck. It was probably the old tune that appealed to the boy, for he lay very still while John hummed the verses, swaying slightly from side to side, and gently beating time with one hand on his son's shoulder. When the song was ended there was a short silence, and then Macgregor sighed, lazily, "Sing 'Leerie' again, paw."

"Leerie," so far as John knew it, was a poem of two lines set to a tune made out of three notes, but he sang it over and over again, softly and soothingly:

> "Leerie, leerie, licht the lamps,
> Lang legs an' crookit shanks";

and, having repeated it perhaps thirty times, he ceased, for Macgregor had fallen sound asleep.

When Lizzie, with wee Jeannie slumbering in her arms, came in ten minutes later, John was sitting alone by the fireside in the semi-darkness.

"Is he sleepin'?" she asked, anxiously.

"Dod, ay!" said John.

"That's guid. He wisna wauken when I wis oot?"

"Aw, jist fur a wee while. I didna gi'e him ony joojoobs, Lizzie," said John, with a quiet laugh, pointing to the wee drawer in the dresser, "but I wis gey sair temptit."

V

"WHEN I'm a man," observed Macgregor, leaning against the knees of his father, who was enjoying an evening pipe before the kitchen fire—"when I'm a man, I'm gaun to be a penter."

"A penter," echoed John. "D' ye hear whit Macgreegor's sayin', Lizzie?" he inquired of his wife.

Lizzie moistened her finger and thumb, twirled the end of a thread, and inserted it into the eye of a needle ere she replied. "Whit kin' o' a penter? Is 't pictur's ye're wantin' to pent, Macgreegor?"

"Naw!" said her son, with great scorn. "I'm gaun to ha'e a big pot o' pent an' a big brush, an' I'm gaun to staun' on a ladder, an' pent wi' white pent, an' rid pent, an' bew pent, an'—"

"Aw, ye're gaun to be a hoose-penter, Macgreegor," said his father.

"Ay. But I'm gaun to pent shopes tae. An' I'm gaun to ha'e big dauds of

potty fur stickin' in holes. I like potty. Here a bit!" And Macgregor produced from his trousers-pocket a lump of the grayish, plastic substance.

"Feech!" exclaimed Lizzie, in disgust. "Whaur got ye that? Ye 'll jist file yer claes wi' the nesty stuff."

"Wullie Thomson whiles gets potty frae his paw. Wullie's paw's a jiner."

"I thocht you an' Wullie had cast oot," said John. "Ha'e ye been makin' freens wi' him again?"

"Naw. But I seen him wi' the potty, an' I askit him for a daud."

"It wis rale nice o' the laddie to gi'e ye a bit," remarked Lizzie, looking up from her seam.

"He didna gi'e it, maw. I tuk it frae him."

"Aw, Macgreegor!" said Lizzie, shaking her head, reproachfully.

"Wullie's bigger nor me, maw."

"Ay; but he's gey wake i' the legs."

"I hut him, an' he tummilt; an' I jist tuk hauf his potty," said Macgregor, unconcernedly.

John was about to laugh, when he caught his wife's eye.

"An' hoo wud ye like," she said, addressing her son, "if yer paw gi'ed ye potty, an' anither laddie cam' an'—"

"Paw hasna ony potty."

John sniggered behind his hand.

"Weel," said Lizzie, casting her husband a severe look, and turning again to her son, "hoo wud ye like if yer paw gi'ed ye taiblet, an' anither laddie cam' an' tuk hauf o' 't awa'?"

"I wud gi'e him yin on the neb twicet!" said Macgregor, boldly, going over to the window to see the lamps being lighted.

"But if he hut ye an' knockit ye doon?"

"I wudna let him. Paw hasna gi'ed me taiblet fur a lang while," said the boy over his shoulder.

"Macgreegor," said his mother, solemnly, "I'm thinkin' ye're gettin' waur every day."

"Aw, the wean's fine, Lizzie," interposed John, softly.

"Haud yer tongue, John," retorted Lizzie, quietly. "The wean's no fine! An' instead o' lauchin' at him an' makin' a pet o' him, ye ocht to be gi'ein' him a guid skelpin'."

"I've never skelpit a wean yet, an'—"

"It's easy seen ye've never skelpit Macgreegor, John. Ye jist let him get his ain wey, an' he disna ken when he's misbehavin' hissel'. Weans needs to be checkit whiles."

"Aweel, whit dae ye want me to dae, Lizzie?"

"I want ye to punish Macgreegor for hittin' that puir speldron o' a laddie, Wullie Thomson, an' stealing his potty," said Lizzie, in an undertone.

Macgregor came back from the window with the putty plastered over his nose.

"Paw, see ma neb!" he said, gayly, unaware of the conversation which had just passed concerning him.

John laughed loudly. "Dod, but ye've a braw neb the nicht, Macgreegor!"

"Tak' it aff this meenit!" cried Lizzie. "John, ye micht think shame o' yersel' to sit there lauchin' at his nesty tricks! D' ye no' mind hoo Mrs. Cochrane's man tell 't us his neb wis aye bew wi' him pittin' potty on 't when he wis a wean? . . . Tak' it aff, Macgreegor, or I'll sort ye!"

Macgregor, but little abashed, returned to the window, removed the offending plaster, rolled it into a ball, and proceeded to squeeze it through his fingers with undisguised relish.

"John," whispered Lizzie, "dae whit I tell't ye."

"I canna," returned John, miserably. "It micht wauken wee Jeannie," he added, a little hopefully.

"I didna exac'ly say ye wis to—to wheep the laddie," said his wife, "but ye maun gi'e him a lesson he'll no' furget. I'm no' gaun to ha'e him boastin' an' ill-usin' ither weans. D' ye see?"

"But whit am I to dae, Lizzie?"

"I'll tell ye, John. Ye'll gang ower to the dresser an' open the wee drawer, an' ye'll tak' oot the taiblet ye brocht hame fur Macgreegor the morn— Are ye listenin'?"

"Ay, wumman."

"An' ye'll tell Macgreegor ye bocht the taiblet fur his Setterday treat, thinkin' he deservit it, but ye've fun' oot he disna deserve it, an' ye canna gi'e him ony."

"Aw, Lizzie!"

"An' ye'll tie up the paircel, an' gar him tak' it roon the corner to Wullie Thomson, an' gi'e it to Wullie Thomson, an' gi'e him back his potty furbye."

"Aw, Lizzie!"

"An' it 'll be a lesson to Macgreegor no' to strike laddies waker nor hissel'. Ye wud be gey sair pit aboot, John, if a muckle laddie wis strikin' Macgreegor."

"Deed, wud I! But—but Macgreegor's that fond o' taiblet."

"Man, man, can ye no' think o' whit's guid fur Macgreegor? That's the wey ye spile him, John. Ye wud gi'e him the cock aff the steeple if he cried fur 't!"

"Maybe ye're richt, Lizzie. But it's a hard thing ye're askin'. Wud it no' dae to gi'e him hauf the taiblet to tak' to Wullie Thomson?"

"Na, na," said Lizzie, firmly. "Here, Macgreegor," she called to her son. "Yer paw wants to speak to ye. . . . Noo, John!"

With a huge sigh, John rose, went to the wee drawer in the dresser, and returned with the poke of "taiblet."

"Paw," said Macgregor, absently, "I like taiblet better nor potty."

The father glanced appealingly at the mother, but she was adamant. She had resumed her needle, but was keeping an eye on the twain.

"Macgreegor," said John, with a painful effort, "whit wey did ye strike puir Wullie Thomson?"

"I wantit a wee daud o' potty."

"Ay," murmured John, and paused for a moment. "Are ye sorry ye hut him?"

"Naw. I got the potty, paw."

"But ye sud be sorry, Macgreegor."

"Whit wey, paw?"

"Wis he greetin'?"

"Ay; wis he!"

John looked across at Lizzie for aid, but she was sewing diligently.

"Weel," he said, haltingly, "yer maw an' me's no' vera pleased wi' whit ye done to Wullie Thomson. It wisna fair to strike the likes o' him."

Macgregor's visage began to assume an anxious expression.

"Yer maw," continued John—"yer maw says ye canna—"

"John!" murmured Lizzie, warningly. "Yer maw and me thinks ye canna get ony taiblet the morn."

Macgregor's under-lip shot out quivering.

"An'—ye've got to gi'e the taiblet to Wullie Thomson, an' gi'e him back his potty, furbye, an'—an'—oh, Lizzie, I canna say ony mair!"

It took a few seconds for the dire truth to dawn upon Macgregor, but when it did a low wail issued from him, and the tears began to flow.

John was about to lift him onto his knee, but Lizzie interposed.

"Pit on yer bunnet, Macgreegor," she said, quietly, "an' tak' the taiblet an' potty roon to Wullie Thomson. It's no' dark yet," she added, glancing out of the window.

"I'm no' wantin' to gi'e the taiblet to Wullie Thomson," sobbed the luckless youngster.

"Ye've jist to dae whit ye're tell't," returned his mother, calmly, but not unkindly. "Ye're no' to be a tawpy noo," she went on, endeavoring to dry his eyes. "Ye're to be a man. Whit

wud Wullie Thomson think if he seen ye greetin'? Eh, Macgreegor?"

Lizzie had struck the right note. The sobs ceased, though the breath still came gustily. He mopped the tears with his cap, and replaced it on his head.

"Am I to gi'e him a' the taiblet an' the potty furbye?" he inquired, plaintively.

"Ay. An' ye're to say ye're sorry fur hurtin' him. He's no' a fine, strong laddie like yersel', Macgreegor—mind that! Yer paw an' me wudna like if ye wis wake i' the legs like puir Wullie. Noo, jist gang roon an' gi'e him the taiblet an' his potty, an' see if ye canna mak' freen's wi' him again."

"I'm no' wantin' to be freen's," said Macgregor, rebelliously. "I'm no' wantin' to gang."

"Are ye feart fur Wullie Thomson?" asked Lizzie. Another clever stroke!

"I'm no' feart! I'll gang!"

"Fine, man!" cried John, who had been listening in gloomy silence. "I kent ye wisna feart."

Macgregor began to feel himself

rather a hero. In dignified silence he took the poke of "taiblet," which his mother had tied securely with a piece of tape from her work-bag, and departed on his errand.

John looked anxiously to Lizzie.

She sat down to her seam again, but her fingers were less deft than usual. They both eyed the clock frequently.

"He sudna be mair nor five meenits," remarked John. "I doot we wis ower hard on the wean, wumman."

Lizzie made no response, and ten minutes dragged slowly past.

"Did ye expec' he wud dae 't?" asked John, presently.

"Och, ay!" she answered, with affected carelessness.

"I wisht I had went wi' him," said John.

Lizzie put in half a dozen stitches in silence. Then she said: "Ye micht gang roon an' see whit's keepin' him, John."

"I'll dae that, Lizzie. . . . Dae ye think I micht buy him a bit taiblet when I'm ootbye?" He asked the question diffidently.

His wife looked up from her seam. "If ye like, John," she said, gently. "I'm thinkin' the laddie's had his lesson noo. He's unco prood fur to be a wean, is he no'?"

"Ay," said John. "There's no' mony like Macgreegor." He nodded to his wife, and went out.

About twenty minutes later father and son re-entered the house together. Both were beaming.

"I cudna get Macgreegor awa' frae Wullie Thomson, Lizzie," said John, smiling.

"Weel, weel," said his wife, looking pleased. "An' did ye gi'e Wullie the taiblet an' the potty, Macgreegor?"

"Ay, maw."

Whereupon his mother caught and cuddled him. "Gi'e him a bit taiblet, John," she said.

John did so right gladly and generously, and Macgregor crumped away to his heart's content.

"An' whit kep' ye waitin' at Wullie's a' this time?" inquired Lizzie, pleasantly.

"He gi'ed me a big daud o' potty,

maw," said the boy, producing a lump the size of an orange.

"Oh!" exclaimed Lizzie, trying not to look annoyed.

"An' him an' me ett the taiblet," added Macgregor.

VI

"HECH! Macgreegor, ye're gaun ower quick fur me," gasped Mr. Purdie, as the youngster whose hand he held hurried him along the Rothesay Esplanade in the early afternoon sunshine.

"I cud gang quicker, granpaw."

"Deed, ay! Ye're fine an' soople! But the boat 'll no' be in fur mair nor hauf an 'oor. Sae we'll jist tak' a sate fur a wee. I'm gettin' auld, Macgreegor, I'm gettin' auld."

"Ay, ye're gey auld," said Macgregor, agreeably.

"But I'm no' that auld," said Mr. Purdie, hastily.

They took a seat facing the bay. Macgregor proceeded to haul in a tin steamboat which he had been dragging after him since they started on their walk, while his grandfather drew from its case a well-seasoned meerschaum, removed the newspaper plug and

"dottle," laid the latter on the top of a fresh fill, and, at the expense of seven or eight matches, lit up.

"I see a boat comin'," exclaimed Macgregor ere they had been seated for five minutes.

"Whaur? . . . Oh ay, But that's no' the richt boat. Wait till ye see a boat wi' twa yella funnels."

"I like rid funnels better nor yella yins. Whit wey is maw comin' in a boat wi' yella funnels?"

"Yer maw disna like the watter, an' the boats wi' yella funnels dinna come sae faur as the boats wi' rid funnels. That's jist the wey o' it, Macgreegor. Ha'e! Pit thae in your gab."

"I like peppermint lozengers," observed Macgregor, drawing in his breath to get the full effect. "I like leemonade, furbye," he added, presently.

"Are ye dry?"

"Ay."

"Aweel, ye'll maybe get a botle afore we gang to the pier. Whit ha'e ye been daein' to yer steamboat? It's a' bashed—see!"

"A laddie trampit on it," said Mac-

gregor, holding up his toy. "But the string gaed roon his leg an' coupit him an' he gaed awa' greetin'. Whit wey is there no' a baun'?" he inquired, looking round at the bandstand.

"It's no' the season yet."

"Whit wey is 't no' the season? I like a baun' wi' a big drum. Wull there be a baun' the morn, granpaw?"

"Na, na. No' till the simmer. If ma hoast's no' better I'll maybe bide in Rothesay till the simmer, and then ye'll come back an' stey wi' yer granny an' me, an' gether wulks, an' dook, an' hear the baun'."

"Is yer hoast bad the noo?"

"Ay; it's gey bad at nicht, Macgreegor."

"I yinst had an awfu' sair hoast," said Macgregor, thoughtfully. "I got code-ile. If you wis takin' code-ile ye micht be better afore the simmer, granpaw."

Mr. Purdie smiled. "Wud ye like ma hoast to be better afore the simmer, Macgreegor?"

"Ay. I — I wud like to bide in Rothesay tae. I dinna like wulks, but

I like pickin' them oot awfu'. I dinna like dookin', but I like paidlin'."

"I'm thinkin' I'll try the code-ile, Macgreegor."

"It's rale nesty to tak'. . . . But it micht mak' yer hoast better afore the simmer. . . . Rothesay's a nice place; is 't no'? . . . I'm gaun ower to luk at the watter." Macgregor slipped off the seat, and, dragging his steamboat behind him, went over to the railings of the esplanade.

"Ye're no' to sclim up," cried Mr. Purdie, rising in alarm. "If ye wis fa'in' in there ye wud be droondit."

"There's an awfu' lot o' watter the day," remarked the boy as his grandfather put an arm around him.

"Ay, ye see the tide's in."

"Oh, there a wee fish! D' ye no' see it, granpaw? There anither!"

"Ye've better sicht nor me. Noo, noo, ye're no' to lean ower that wey. Ye canna soom, ye ken. An' whit wud yer maw say if ye fell in?"

"She wud gi'e me ile—no' the code-ile, but the ither ile. It's faur waur. I'm gaun fur to sail ma boat noo."

"Ye canna sail it there."

"Ay, can I! See!" Macgregor lowered his toy with the string till it touched the water a yard beneath them. After several partial swampings it was induced to float on a comparatively even keel. "It's soomin'!" he exclaimed in triumph as he jerked it about. And then the string slipped from his fingers. He turned to his grandfather in dire dismay.

"Puir laddie," said Mr. Purdie, looking about for help in the shape of a rowing craft.

"Ma boat, ma boat!" wailed Macgregor, softly.

Old Mr. Purdie went down on his knees, suppressing a groan as he did so, laid his pipe on the ground, and, leaning over the edge, endeavored to secure the string with his walking-stick. For several minutes he wrought, but all in vain, and then Macgregor cried out that his boat was sinking. It was too true! Damaged, doubtless, by many a stormy passage on dry land, and also by being tramped upon, the luckless vessel had gradually filled, and now it was being

slowly but surely submerged. Mr. Purdie, in great distress, endeavored to save it with his stick by getting a hold of the metal rigging, but his sight was poor and his hand shaky, and he only succeeded in giving it a prod amidships, which precipitated the disaster. Down, down, in ten feet of clear water it quietly sank, while its owner could do naught but watch and wail, "Ma boat, ma boat!"

Mr. Purdie rose, rubbing his knees and coughing. "I'm rale vexed, Macgreegor," he began.

Crunch!

"Ma pipe, ma pipe!"

Alas! troubles never come singly. Macgregor had lost his beloved boat; Mr. Purdie had trod upon and reduced his dear old pipe to atoms.

"Ma boat, ma boat!"

"Ma pipe, ma pipe!"

The boy gazed despairingly into the depths; his grandfather stared gloomily at the ground.

"Dinna greet, laddie," said Mr. Purdie, at last.

"I'm no' greetin'," returned Mac-

gregor, rubbing his eyes with his sleeve and sniffing violently. Then he perceived the trouble which had befallen his companion.

"Whit wey—" he began, and stopped, stricken dumb by the distress in the old face.

"Macgreegor," said Mr. Purdie, taking out a shabby purse, "ye'll maybe get yer boat when the tide gang oot. I'll tell the man ower thonder to keep his e'e on it. An'—an' ye're no' to greet."

"I'm no' greetin', granpaw."

"Aweel, I'm rale vexed fur ye. An' I wudna like ye to be meetin' yer maw wi' sic a lang face. Ha'e! There's a saxpence, Macgreegor. Jist rin ower to the shopes an' buy onythin' ye ha'e a fancy fur, an' I'll wait fur ye here. Noo, ye dinna need to gang faur—jist ower the road. An' haste ye back, fur it's near time fur yer maw's boat." Having thus delivered himself, Mr. Purdie heaved a big sigh and looked once more at the wreckage at his feet. The meerschaum had been a presentation, and he had valued it exceedingly. "It wis gettin' auld like hissel', but it wisna

near dune yet," had been the substance of a frequent remark of his friends to him during the last five or six years. And now—now it was "dune."

"Are ye no' gaun to the shopes?" he asked his grandson, who was still looking at the sixpence.

"Ay. I'm gaun," said Macgregor. "Thenk ye, granpaw," he added, remembering for once his mother's good instructions. And, his small visage wreathed in smiles of joyful anticipation, he ran off.

Mr. Purdie saw him disappear into a fancy-goods emporium, and then stooped down and gathered the fragments of his pipe into a large red handkerchief, which he carefully deposited in a side-pocket of his coat. After that he marked the place where Macgregor's toy had sunk, and toddled along to tell the nearest boat-hirer to look out for the wreck at low water. He was beginning to get anxious when Macgregor reappeared jubilant, dragging behind him a clattering object.

"Did ye buy anither boat?" inquired Mr. Purdie, feeling rather disappointed,

for the boat-hirer had assured him that the wreck could easily be recovered.

"It's no' a boat," said Macgregor, smiling. "It's a beast."

"A beast?"

"Ay, granpaw. A aggilator."

"A whit?"

"Aggilator! That's whit the wife in the shope said it wis. Luk at its taes! It can soom, but I'm no' gaun to pit it in the sea."

Mr. Purdie examined the new purchase. "Oh, I see," he said, at last. "It's whit they ca' a—a—a crocidile, Macgreegor."

"Naw, it's no' a crocidile, granpaw, it's a aggilator."

"Weel, weel, it's a queer like thing to buy onywey; but if ye're pleased wi' it, that's a' aboot it. Noo, it's time we wis gaun to meet yer maw."

Macgregor gave his disengaged hand to his grandfather, and they proceeded pierward. Silently they went for a minute, at the end of which Macgregor remarked: "I didna spend a' my saxpence on ma aggilator, granpaw."

"Did ye no'? Whit did ye pey fur 't?"

"Fowerpence. I bocht a wheen strippit ba's."

"Did ye?"

"Ay, but I didna spend a' the tippence on them."

"Ye wud keep a penny fur yer pooch, like a wice laddie."

"Naw. I bocht ye a pipe, granpaw," said Macgregor, grinning. He released his hand and dived into his pocket.

"Weel, I never!" said Mr. Purdie, receiving a small paper parcel from his grandson. "To think the wean mindit me!" he murmured to himself. He patted Macgregor on the head and removed the paper.

"It's an awfu' nice kin' o' pipe, granpaw," said Macgregor. "Ye pit watter intilt, an' then ye blaw, an' it whustles like a birdie!"

Mr. Purdie fairly gaped at the instrument of torture in his hand. For a moment he seemed to be stunned. Then he exclaimed, "It bates a'!" and went into a fit of chuckling, which was only stopped by the advent of a "hoast."

"Dae ye like it, granpaw?" asked Macgregor.

"Fine, laddie, fine!" said Mr. Purdie, when he had recovered his breath. "Dod, ye're paw'll ha'e a guid lauch when he sees ma new pipe. Ye'll ha'e to learn me to play on 't, though."

"Ay, I'll learn ye," said Macgregor, graciously, and he looked much gratified at the prospect.

"Can ye see the boat comin'?" inquired the old man, a little later.

"Ay. It's comin' frae the licht-hoose."

"Weel, it 'll no' be in fur a wee yet. We'll jist tak' a sate on the pier."

"Ay, granpaw. . . . I'm gey dry."

"Tits! I near forgot yer leemonade. But we'll shin pit that richt, Macgreegor."

VII

IT was evident that the Robinson family, as it tramped along Argyll Street that Saturday afternoon, was bent on business of importance. Lizzie and wee Jeannie were dressed in their best, which would take rather long to describe; Macgregor had on his Sunday suit and a new glengarry bonnet; and John wore his pot hat a little to one side, and suffered from a high, tight collar, the points of which nipped his neck every time he moved his head.

"Are we near there, paw?" inquired Macgregor, looking up to his father's face.

John looked down at his son, smothered an exclamation of agony, and replied in the affirmative.

"Whit wey dae folk get likenesses tooken?" asked the boy.

"Dod, ye may weel speir, Macgreegor! It's yer maw wants a pictur' fur to gi'e to yer granpaw Purdie."

"I'm no' wantin' to be tooken, paw."

"Are ye no', ma man? Deed I'm gey sweirt masel'. But yer maw wants the pictur'."

"Whit's that ye're sayin' to Macgreegor, John?" said Lizzie.

"Aw," replied her husband, turning to her, and wincing as the collar bit him, "Macgreegor an' me wis thinkin' we wis feart fur the photygrapher."

"Oh ay," said Lizzie, with a good-humored smile. "Aweel, wee Jeannie an' me 'll no' let him hurt ye—wull we, ma doo? But whit's wrang wi' ye, John? Ye're makin' maist frichtsome faces!"

"It's the collar, wumman. Ye wud ha'e me to pit it on."

"It luks rale nice. Is 't a wee thing ticht?"

"Dod, it's like to nip the neck aff me!"

"Never heed, John. It 'll come oot fine in the photygraph. Mercy me! whaur's Macgreegor?"

They retraced their steps anxiously, and discovered their son standing on the curb, gazing longingly at the barrow

of a vendor of hokey-pokey or some similarly elusive dainty.

"Macgreegor, tak' yer paw's haun', an' dinna let me catch ye stravaygin' awa' again, or ye'll get nae carvies to yer tea," said Lizzie, glad enough to have found the youngster so speedily.

"John," she added, "fur ony sake, keep a grup o' the wean."

"Come on, Macgreegor," said John, holding out his hand. "We're jist comin' to the photygrapher's."

Presently they began to climb a long, narrow stair.

"Gi'e wee Jeannie to me, Lizzie," said John.

"Ay; ye'll manage her better nor me. I'm no' wantin' to be photygraphed wi' a rid face an' pechin," said Lizzie, handing over her burden, on receipt of which John suffered fresh torments from his collar.

"Maw, wull I get ma likeness tooken wi' ma greengarry bunnet on?" asked Macgregor, as they toiled upward.

"Ye'll see whit the man says," returned his mother.

"I'm no' wantin' him to tak' it aff."

"Weel, weel, ye'll see whit he says."

"Wull ye tak' aff yer ain bunnet, maw?"

"That's a daft-like thing to be askin'."

"Whit wey—"

"Whisht, whisht!" said Lizzie, who was evidently anxious to save her breath.

At last they reached the top flat, and were accommodated with seats in the reception-room. Lizzie took wee Jeannie on her knee, and proceeded to make the child as neat as a new pin, conversing with her the while.

"Paw," inquired Macgregor, staring at a number of photographs on the wall, "whit wey dae folk mak' faces when they get their likenesses tooken?"

"Thae's jist real faces," said John, laughing and putting his hand to his throat.

"Can I get makin' a face when I'm gettin' ma likeness tooken?"

"Yer maw wudna like that."

"Whit wey, paw?"

"Och, jist—jist because she wudna. See, Macgreegor, yer maw's wantin' ye."

Lizzie beckoned the boy to her. "Macgreegor, pu' up yer stockin', an' dinna screw yer face like that. . . . Oh, laddie, whit wey did ye gang an' mak' yer heid sae toosie? Staun' till I get yer hair to lie." She fished a comb from her pocket and used it till she had reduced the unruly locks to order. "Noo, sit doon on that chair, an' dinna stir a fit till the man's ready fur us. John!"

"Weel, Lizzie?"

"Come ower here till I pu' doon yer jayket. It gars ye look fair humphy backit."

"Hoots, wumman, I'm no' gaun to get ma back tooken," said John, coming over, nevertheless.

"Ye never ken hoo ye'll get tooken," said Lizzie, sagely. "I wis lukin' at some o' the pictur's here, an' some o' them's no' jist whit I wud ca' inchantin'."

"Ye better no' let wee Jeannie see them, or she'll be gettin' frichtit. Eh, wee Jeannie, whit dae ye say, ma duckie?" he said, laughing and chucking his daughter under the chin.

"Paw!" exclaimed wee Jeannie. "Paw-aw-aw!"

"Fine, lassie, fine!" cried her father. He was in great form now, his collar-stud having given way a minute previously.

"Noo, yer jayket's lyin' better, John," said his wife. "But yer tie—oh, man, yer tie's awa' up the back o' yer heid!"

"I canna help it, wumman. If I pit on yin o' thae masher collars, ma tie slips ower it, as shair's daith!"

"But whit wey dae ye no' use the tabs?"

"Och, I'm fur nane o' yer tabs! Never heed, Lizzie. I'll pu' it doon masel'."

"Tits!" exclaimed Lizzie. "I near had it that time! Noo—noo I've got it. There!"

At the word of triumph the tie slipped into its place, but the collar flew open.

"Whit's ado wi' ye, John?" she cried, a little crossly. "Whit wey did you unbutton it?"

"The stud's broke!"

"The stud's broke? Oh, John, an' you gaun to ha'e yer photygraph tooken!"

"Ach, it's a' richt, dearie. I'll jist button my jayket, an' that 'll haud it thegither. See, that's fine!"

"Oh, John," she began, but just then a voice requested the family to step into the adjoining room.

"Mind, John, it's to be a caybinet growp," whispered Lizzie, as she took a last survey of wee Jeannie and Macgregor.

John explained his wishes to the photographer, and presently the group was arranged—Lizzie with wee Jeannie on her knee, Macgregor standing beside her with his toes turned well out, and John behind with one hand resting affectionately on her shoulder. Then the photographer dived under the black cloth.

"Whit's he daein', paw?" inquired Macgregor, in a hoarse whisper.

"Whisht!" murmured Lizzie.

"He's spyin'," said John, softly.

"Whit wey is he spyin', paw?"

"Jist to see hoo we're a' behavin'," returned his father, jocularly. "Eh, Lizzie?"

"Be quate, John!" whispered Lizzie, severely. She was sitting very stiff and dignified. Wee Jeannie began to show signs of restlessness, but ere long the photographer reappeared. He suggest-

ed that the little boy should remove his hat, and that the gentleman should open his jacket.

"I'm dune fur noo," muttered John, with a wry smile.

"Macgreegor, tak' aff yer bunnet," said Lizzie, miserably, fearful of what would shortly happen behind her.

"I'm no' wantin' to tak' aff ma bunnet, maw," said Macgregor.

"Dae whit ye're tell 't. Ye can haud it in yer haun'."

"Yes, just so. Hold your bonnet in your hand, my little man," said the photographer, pleasantly.

Macgregor obeyed sulkily.

"Kindly undo all the buttons—all the buttons, please," said the photographer to John, with great politeness, and turned to the camera.

With a feeble snigger John undid the last but one. Lizzie's head had been sinking lower and lower. She felt she was about to be affronted.

"Maw," said Macgregor, suddenly, "I —I've toosied ma heid. Wull I pit on my greengarry bunnet again?"

Lizzie looked up quickly, and whipped

something from near her waist. "John," she said, "gang to the ither room, an' see if I left me caim on the table." Her voice sank to a whisper. "An'—an'—here's twa preens." She turned to the photographer. "Ye'll excuse me keepin' ye waitin' a meenit, sir?" she said to him. "This laddie's a rale wee tease," she added, softly.

The photographer smiled good-humoredly, and immediately she discovered that the comb was in her pocket, after all. She tidied her son's hair carefully, and said: "I think I wud like him tooken in his bunnet, if ye've nae objections."

"Oh, very well," replied the man, agreeably. "His expression was certainly happier with it than without."

John entered grinning, his jacket thrown open. "I cudna fin' yer caim onywhere, Lizzie."

"Och, I had it in ma poket, efter a'. Noo, we're ready, if you please, sir," she said to the photographer, who, without delay, set about his business.

He waited till the smiles had died down somewhat, when he instructed

them where and how to look, and made an exposure, which Macgregor spoiled by scratching his nose at the critical moment.

"I cudna help it, paw. Ma neb wis that kitly," said the boy.

"Weel, ye maun jist thole the next time, Macgreegor. Noo he's gaun to tak' anither yin."

"Whit's that wee thing he scoots wi'?"

"Whisht!"

"Steady, please," requested the photographer.

Wee Jeannie began to wriggle on her mother's knee.

"Oh, see! oh, see!" said Lizzie, pointing to the camera. "Oh, see, a boney wee winda!"

"Paw, whit's inside the boax?" asked Macgregor.

"If you please," said the photographer. "Now when I say three—One—two—th—"

"Am I tooken, paw?"

"No' yet, Macgreegor, no' yet. Ye near spilet anither photygraph. Keep quate, noo."

"Noona, noona," said Lizzie, dandling wee Jeannie, who was exhibiting fractious symptoms. "Wee Jeannie's gaun to ha'e her likeness tooken i' the boney wee winda! (My! John, I wisht I had brocht her auld jumpin'-jake.) Oh, see! oh, see!"

A lull at last occurred, and the photographer took advantage of it; and, after another period of unrest, he secured a third negative, which he assured Lizzie would prove highly successful. John had expected to take the photographs away with him, but his wife informed him in a whisper that he mustn't think of such a thing. "Caybinet growps" took time. Matters, having been settled, the family departed from the studio.

"Maw, wull my greengarry bunnet ha'e a rid toorie in the likeness?" inquired Macgregor.

"It 'll no' be rid, onywey, dearie."

"Whit wey, maw?" He was obviously deeply disappointed.

"Speir at yer paw, ma mannie."

Macgregor repeated the question.

"Aweel, if it disna come oot rid,"

said John, "I'll ha'e it pentit rid fur ye. Dod, I wull, fur ye're jist a jool! Is he no, Lizzie?"

"Oh, wee toosie heid!" cried his mother, with a laugh and a sigh.

VIII

"RIN to the door, Macgreegor, an' see wha' it is," said Mrs. Robinson, who was engaged in feeding wee Jeannie with tit-bits from the Saturday dinner-table.

Stuffing half a potato into his mouth, the boy slipped from his chair and obeyed orders.

"It's maybe Mrs. M'Ostrich," remarked Lizzie to her husband.

"Whit wud she be wantin'?" inquired John, who was leaning back in his chair, looking perfectly satisfied with life, and idly whittling a match into a tooth-pick.

"I wis expec'in' her to bring back the things she got the len' o' yesterday."

"Whit things?"

"Did I no' tell ye? Aweel, Mrs. M'Ostrich wis ha'ein' comp'ny last nicht, an' she speirt if I wud len' her the twa bew vazes, an' the mauve tidy wi' the

yella paurrit on it, an' the cheeny mulk-joog, an' a wheen ither things."

"Dod, she's no blate!"

"Aw, puir wumman, she hasna muckle in her hoose, an' she's that fond o' comp'ny."

"Deed she micht ha'e askit us yins til her pairty!" said John, laughing good-naturedly.

"Ye ken fine ye wudna gang til her pairty if she askit ye a thoosan' times. But whit's keepin' Macgreegor? . . . Macgreegor, whit's keepin' ye?"

"I'm comin', maw," replied a choked voice.

"Weel, haste ye! . . . It's no' been Mrs. M'Ostrich, efter a'. Deed, I hope she hasna chippit the bew vazes. . . . Here, Macgreegor, wha wis at the door?"

"It wis postie, maw."

"Whit kep' ye?"

"He's gied me a cheuch jean, an' I've ett it, an' here's a letter fur paw."

"Tits, laddie! Ye're ower chief wi' the postman. Whit's the big letter aboot, John?"

"Whit dae ye think, Lizzie?" asked her husband, grinning.

"I ken whit it is," put in Macgregor, "fur I keekit in. It's ma likeness!"

"John! is 't the photygraphs?"

"Ay, is it!"

"Aw, John, quick!—let me see! My! I thocht they wis never comin'. Mind ye dinna file them, John, an' dinna let Macgreegor tich them till he's washed his hauns. . . . Oh, wee Jeannie, ye're gaun tae see yer boney likeness!—eh, ma doo? . . . Macgreegor, mak' a clean plate, and then wash yer hauns. . . . John, John, yer fingers is a' thoombs! Can ye no' open it?"

"Ye're in an awfu' hurry, Lizzie," said John, teasingly, pretending to fumble with the packet. "Maybe ye'll shin be wishin' I hadna opened it."

"Ach, awa' wi' ye! I ken the pictur's is first-class. Come on, John. Nane o' yer palavers!"

So John opened the packet, which contained six very highly polished cabinets, and, after a moment's inspection, burst into a great guffaw.

"Man, ye're jist a big wean!" said his wife, a little impatiently. "Let me see yin o' them."

"There ye are, wumman. Dod, it's rale comic!"

"I want yin, paw," said Macgregor.

"An' ye'll get yin, ma mannie. Ha'e! Whit dae ye think o' that?"

Macgregor studied the photograph for half a minute, and then looked up at his father with an expression of disappointment.

"Whit wey is ma toorie no' rid, paw?" he demanded.

John stopped smiling, and looked uncomfortable.

"Ye said it wud be rid," said the boy.

"Ay, I mind I said I wud tell the man to pent it rid, but—but I clean furgot. It's a braw likeness, though—is 't no', Macgreegor?"

"I wantit ma toorie to be rid, an' it's black," said Macgregor, coldly.

"I'm rale vexed I furgot to tell the man. . . . Lizzie, did ye hear whit Macgreegor wis saying?"

"Eh?" said Lizzie, who had been delightedly occupied in examining the details of the family group and pointing out some of them to wee Jeannie.

"Macgreegor's no' pleased at his

bunnet no' ha'ein' a rid toorie," said John. "Ye see, I furgot to tell the man to pent it rid."

"It's jist as weel, John, fur it wud be a daft-like thing to ha'e a rid toorie in a photygraph."

"But ma bunnet's toorie's rid, maw," said her son.

"Ay, dearie. But rid an' bew an' yella an' ither colors canna be tooken in a likeness."

"Whit wey can they no'?"

"I canna tell ye that. An' it wudna be vera nice to pit pent on a photygraph."

"Whit wey, maw?"

"Aw, it jist wudna be nice. . . . Dis wee Jeannie ken her paw? Dis she?" Lizzie cried, returning to the photograph and her daughter. "Ay, fine she kens her paw!"

"It's mair nor her paw dis," observed John, a trifle dejectedly. "I'm lukin' as if I wis a toff gaun to be chokit, wi' that masher collar."

"Ye're lukin' fine, John," said his wife. "An' I'm rale gled I got ye to pit on the collar. Ye're a wee bit

solemn; but I dinna care to see a man ower jocose-like in a photygraph; it gars me think o' the likenesses in the papers o' folk that ha'e been cured o' indisgeestion. . . . Ah! ye wee cutty!" —this to wee Jeannie—"ye're no' to pit the boney pictur' in the gravy!"

"I dinna think it's a boney pictur'," observed Macgregor, who was nursing his chagrin. "It's a nesty auld pictur'!"

"Haud yer tongue, Macgreegor," said his mother.

"It's an ugly auld pictur'! I dinna like it a wee tate! I wudna—"

"Sh-h-h! Ye're no' to talk that silly wey. Yer granpaw Purdie 'll be weel pleased wi' it—wull he no', John?"

"I hope he wull, Lizzie. It's no' bad, takin' it a' thegither, but—"

"I tell 't Granpaw Purdie it wud ha'e a rid toorie, an'—an' it hasna," said Macgregor.

"Och, whit's aboot a rid toorie?" said his mother, laughing.

"But I'm rale vexed aboot it," said his father, gravely. "I promised Macgreegor the toorie wud be pentit rid, an'—"

"Weel, Macgreegor canna ha'e it rid noo, an' that's jist a' aboot it."

"An' I tell 't Wullie Thomson it wud be rid, and Wullie Thomson tell 't a' the ither laddies," said the youngster, with a quaver in his voice.

"Ye sudna ha'e tell 't onybody it wud be rid till ye wis shair o' 't," remarked Lizzie.

"But I wis as shair 's onythin'. Paw said it wud be rid!"

The unintentional reproach rendered John dumb with misery.

"Ye best gang oot an' play fur a wee," said Lizzie.

"I'm no' wantin' to gang oot," replied her son, sulkily.

"Ye'll jist dae whit I bid ye, Macgreegor. Wee Jeannie's gaun to ha'e a nap, for she wis restless last nicht, an' she wudna sleep i' the forenune. Sae aff ye gang, ma mannie, an' ye'll get carvies to yer tea. But dinna gang faur, mind."

"Maybe Macgreegor's no' wantin' to gang ootbye," said John, with an effort.

"That wud be somethin' new. Awa' wi' ye, Macgreegor, an' play wi' Wullie Thomson."

Very unwillingly Macgregor departed.

"John, ye sudna interfere when I'm tellin' Macgreegor to dae this or that," said Lizzie, softly, as she patted her daughter, who was nearly asleep.

"Weel, I daursay I'm wrang, dearie. But I'm rale vexed fur Macgreegor. Did ye no' see hoo sweirt he wis to gang ootbye?"

"He's whiles gey dour, ye ken."

"Ay, but it wisna a' dourness. The puir laddie wis feart o' bein' whit ye wud ca' affrontit."

"Affrontit?"

"Ay, jist that. Fur whit wis he to say if Wullie Thomson an' the ither laddies askit him aboot his likeness? Ye see, Lizzie, I've nae doot he's been boastin' a wee aboot gettin' a pictur' o' hissel' wi' a rid toorie—an' noo—"

"Hoots, John! It's no sic a serious maitter as a' that."

"It's gey serious to the wean. Macgreegor's unco prood, an' it 'll be a sair job fur him to tell the laddies aboot his pictur' no' ha'ein' a rid toorie, efter a'."

"He sudna ha'e boastit."

"Aw, Lizzie!"

"He needna tell the laddies."

"But that's jist whit he'll dae, fur they'll no' furget to ask him, an' he'll no' tell a lee."

"I ken that, John."

"Weel, then, the laddies 'll lauch at him an' mak' a mock o' him fur guid kens hoo lang aboot his rid toorie."

"I'll sort them if they mak' a mock o' ma laddie," exclaimed Lizzie, indignantly.

"Na, na. Ye canna dae that, wumman. The wean's jist got to suffer, an' it's a' ma fau't—a' ma fau't."

Lizzie rose without replying, and, having deposited wee Jeannie in bed, set about clearing the dinner-table. When she had finished washing-up she turned to John, who was smoking "up the lum" in a melancholy fashion.

"I wis wonderin' if ye cudna get a rid toorie pentit yet," she said.

"Dae ye mean that, Lizzie?" he exclaimed, starting up.

"Ay. It wud please the wean, an' yersel' furbye. An' cud ye no' jist dae 't yersel'?"

"But I've nae pent. An' it wud be gey difficult to pent on that glossy stuff

unless ye kent the wey," said John, thoughtfully regarding the photograph.

"It jist wants a wee tick o' rid, dis it no'?"

"Ay, jist a wee tick, an'— dod, wumman, I ken whit 'll dae!" cried John, in sudden ecstasy.

"Whisht, whisht! Mind wee Jeannie. Weel, whit is it?"

"Whit d 'ye think?"

"I cudna guess."

"Jist a wee tick o' a penny stamp," replied the husband, in a triumphant whisper.

"Noo, if that's no' clever!" murmured Lizzie, admiringly. "An' I've a stamp in ma purse, fur I wis gaun to write to Mrs. Purdie to tell her we cudna gang to wur tea on Wensday. My! John, ye're a faur-seein' man, and Macgreegor 'll be that pleased."

A minute later the twain were seated at the table with a photograph between them.

"I'm thinkin' ye're a braw wumman, Lizzie," said John.

"Ye're jist a blether," said Lizzie, without looking the least offended.

Presently she handed over her scissors, and John cut "a wee tick" from the stamp which she had already given him.

"Canny, noo, John," she muttered. "It wud be a peety to spile the photygraph."

"I'll manage it," he returned. . . . Dod, but I've swallowed it!"

"Tak' anither wee tick, John."

Another "wee tick" was taken from the stamp and successfully affixed to the tiny "toorie" of Macgregor's bonnet as it appeared in the photograph. Then John sat up, regarding his handiwork with no small satisfaction.

"Eh, Lizzie?"

"Fine, John!"

"The wean 'ill be pleased?"

"Deed, ay."

The twain beamed upon each other.

When Macgregor came in he found them still beaming, and he beamed also.

"Weel, ma mannie," said John, gayly, "wis ye playin' wi' Wullie Thomson?"

"Ay, paw. I wis playin' wi' Wullie an' the ither laddies at tig, an' I never wis het!"

"Ye didna say onythin' aboot rid toories, did ye?" inquired his father, with a surreptitious wink at Lizzie, who had the photograph under her apron.

"Ay. I tell 't them I wisna gaun to ha'e a rid toorie in ma likeness, because a black yin wis finer."

"An' whit did they say to that?" asked Lizzie.

"They a' said it wis finer excep' Tam Jamieson, an' I hut him on the neb, an' then he said black wis finer nor rid."

"But, Macgreegor," said John, motioning to Lizzie to keep silence, "wud ye no' like a pictur' wi' a rid toorie on yer bunnet?"

"Nae fears!" returned Macgregor, with sublime contempt. "I'm no' fur rid toories ony mair, paw."

John and Lizzie looked helplessly at each other.

IX

"OCH, wumman, I'm no' heedin' aboot Mrs. M'Ostrich an' her pairty," said John, as he folded a strip of newspaper with which to light his pipe.

"Aw, but ye'll gang, John," said Lizzie, persuasively.

"Are ye wantin' to gang yersel'?"

"Weel, ye see, it's no' as if I wis oot every ither nicht, an'—"

"Dod, then, we'll jist gang. I doot I whiles furget ye're in the hoose a' day; an' ye've had a gey sair time wi' wee Jeannie fur twa-three weeks. Ay, we'll jist gang."

Lizzie looked pleased. "When Mrs. M'Ostrich wis in this mornin' to get the len' o' ma bew vazes, an' the mauve tidy wi' the yella paurrit on it, an' a wheen ither things, she says to me, says she: 'Mrs. Robison, ye're weel aff wi' yer man'; and then she says—"

"Hoots!" interrupted John, "I'm

thinkin' Mrs. M'Ostrich is an auld blether."

"Auld blethers whiles say a true word," observed his wife. Then, fearing perhaps she was expressing too much in the way of sentiment, she became suddenly practical. "I've a braw sark ready fur ye. I done it up the day."

"Am I to pit on ma guid claes?"

"Oh ay, John."

"But no' a staun'-up collar?"

"Aw, John! An' I've a beauty jist waitin' fur ye. Ye luk that smairt in a staun'-up collar. I wis thinkin' o' that when I wis ernin' it, an' if ye had jist seen hoo carefu'—"

"Ach, Lizzie, ye get ower me every time! If ye wis tellin' me to gang to Mrs. M'Ostrich's pairty wi' yin o' wee Jeannie's rid flannen goonies on, I wud jist ha'e to dae 't!"

"Havers!" cried his wife, laughing the laugh of a woman who gains her point. "We'd best be gettin' ready shin."

"But whit aboot the weans?" asked John.

"Macgreegor's comin' wi' you an' me. Mrs. M'Ostrich said we wis to bring

him, fur I tell 't her I wis sweirt to leave him in the hoose."

"That's guid!" said her husband, with a smile of satisfaction. "Macgreegor likes pairties."

"I hope he'll no' affront us, John."

"Aw, the wean's fine, Lizzie. An' whit aboot wee Jeannie?"

"She'll sleep soon, an' Mrs. M'Faurlan's comin' to sit in the hoose till we get back."

"I see ye've arranged it a'," he said, good-humoredly. "Whit wud ye ha'e dune if I had said I wudna gang?"

"Ah, but I kent ye wud gang. . . . Ye micht rin doon the stair the noo an' get a haud o' Macgreegor. He's ootbye playin' wi' Wullie Thomson. They've baith got sookers, an' they like fine when the streets is kin' o' wat. I dinna think sookers is vera nice things to play wi'."

"I yinst had yin masel', an' I near got the nick for pu'in' the stanes oot the streets. . . . Weel, I'll awa' an' see efter Macgreegor."

Later in the evening the trio set out for the abode of Mrs. M'Ostrich, who,

as Lizzie was wont to remark, "hadna muckle in her hoose, puir thing, but wis that fond o' comp'ny." Mrs. M'Ostrich, however, never had the least hesitation in borrowing from her friends any decorative article she did not possess, so that her little parlor on the occasion of one of her parties was decorated in quite gorgeous style. Her chief trouble was her husband, who, being a baker, retired to the kitchen bed early in the evening, and snored with such vigor and enthusiasm that the company in the other room heard him distinctly. Mrs. M'Ostrich had tried many devices, including that of a clothes-pin jammed on the snorer's proboscis, but all without avail. In the case of the clothes-pin, Mr. M'Ostrich, who had meekly submitted to its being fixed, had shortly after suffered from a sort of nightmare, and, half awake, had startled a party in the parlor by frantic beatings on the wall and weird yellings to the effect that some one was trying to suffocate him. After that he was allowed to snore in peace, and Mrs. M'Ostrich had to explain to any new visitors the meaning of

the disturbance. This she did to John and Lizzie immediately on their arrival.

They were the last of the guests to appear, the six others being already seated round the parlor, doing a little talking and a good deal of staring at the decorations, the number and glory of which seemed to have quite paralyzed a little woman who sat in the window.

"Maw," whispered Macgregor, who had been accommodated with a hassock at his mother's feet, "thon bew vazes is awfu' like oor yins."

"Whisht!" said Lizzie. . . . "As ye wis sayin', Mrs. M'Ostrich—"

"Maw, there a tidy wi' a yella paurrit on thon—"

"Whisht, Macgreegor!" said Lizzie, giving her son a severe look.

"He's a shairp laddie," observed Mrs. M'Ostrich, who did not really mind, so long as her guests recognized only their own particular contributions to the grandeur of her surroundings.

"Awa' an' sit aside yer paw, Macgreegor," said Lizzie. . . . "John, see if ye can keep Macgreegor quate."

The boy dumped his hassock over

the feet of two of the company, and squatted beside his father. He felt rather out of his element among so many adults, most of them elderly, and he was disturbed at seeing his father looking so stiff and solemn.

A dreary half-hour went by, at the end of which he could keep silence no longer.

"Paw," he said to his parent, who was listening conscientiously to the long story of a Mrs. Bowley concerning her husband's baldness—"paw, whit's that noise?"

"Aw, never heed, ma mannie," replied John, aware that the noise proceeded from the slumbering Mr. M'Ostrich. "It's jist a noise."

"It's awfu' like a big grumphy, paw."

"Sh! Ye're no' to speak the noo."

"If I had a big grumphy—"

"Whit's the laddie sayin'?" inquired Mrs. Bowley, smiling so kindly that Macgregor accepted her as a friend there and then.

"It's a grumphy," he explained, confidentially. "Dae ye no' hear it?"

Mrs. Bowley laughed, and patted his head. "Ye mauna speak aboot grumphies the noo, dearie," she whispered. "Here's a bit sweetie fur ye."

Macgregor put the dainty in his mouth, and drew the hassock a trifle nearer to Mrs. Bowley. "Ye're awfu' kind," he said, in a hoarse undertone, and he and the good lady entertained each other for quite a long time, much to John's relief.

About half-past nine the company drew as near to the oval table as their numbers permitted, and did justice to the light refreshments which the hostess had provided. Macgregor, ignoring his mother's warning glances, and evidently forgetting there was such a fluid in the world as castor-oil, punished the pastry with the utmost severity, and consumed two whole bottles of lemonade.

"It's an awfu' nice pairty, paw," he whispered, when the chairs had been put back to the walls. "Are we gaun hame noo?"

Before John could reply, Mrs. M'Ostrich requested the attention of the company to a song by Mr. Pumpher-

ston. All eyes were turned on a large, middle-aged man in one corner of the room, who wiped his brow repeatedly, and appeared very uneasy.

"Come awa', Mr. Pumpherston," said Mrs. M'Ostrich, encouragingly. "Jist ony sang ye like. Ye needna be feart. We're nane o' us musical crickets."

"Ay, come awa', Mr. Pumpherston," murmured several of the guests, clapping their hands.

"Is he a comic, paw?" inquired Macgregor.

"Whisht!" said Lizzie, sighting danger ahead, and giving John, beside whom she was now sitting, a nudge with her elbow.

Mr. Pumpherston shuffled his chair an inch forward, fixed his eyes on the ceiling, and hummed, "Do, me, soh, do, soh, me, do."

"Ay, he's a comic!" said Macgregor, in a delighted whisper.

Some one sniggered, and John gently but firmly put his hand over his son's mouth.

"He's jist lukin' fur the key, as it were," observed Mrs. Pumpherston, the

little lady who had been overcome by Mrs. M'Ostrich's parlor decorations. "He's whiles gey slow at catchin' the richt key, but he'll be gettin' it in a wee," she added, as her husband continued his "Do, me, soh, do, soh, me, do," to the intense enjoyment of Macgregor, who quaked on the hassock in enforced silence.

At last Mr. Pumpherston started "Ye Banks and Braes," but when half through the first verse was compelled to stop and make search for a lower key.

"It's aye the wey wi' him," explained his wife. "But when yinst he gets the richt key he sings it weel eneugh, if he disna furget the words. . . . Ha'e ye got the richt key noo, Geordie?"

"I wis near it; but ye've pit me aff it. But I'll get it yet," quoth Mr. Pumpherston, determinedly. And he did get it eventually, and regaled the company in a voice surprisingly small for such a large man.

Macgregor was much disappointed, if not indignant, at being deceived, as he believed, by Mr. Pumpherston; but presently, feeling drowsy, he climbed

into his father's arms and dropped into a peaceful little doze. So he rested while several guests contributed songs, not all, by-the-way, such efforts as that of Mr. Pumpherston.

Lizzie and John were congratulating themselves upon their son's good behavior during the evening and Mrs. Bowley and another lady had just finished telling them what a "braw laddie" they were so fortunate as to possess, when Macgregor awoke, rubbed his eyes, and stared about him.

"Puir mannie, he's jist deid wi' sleep," remarked kindly Mrs. Bowley.

"He is that," assented the other lady. "Are ye wearit, dearie?"

"There's no' mony weans wud behave theirsel's like him," observed Mrs. M'Ostrich.

Mrs. Pumpherston said nothing, but smiled sourly. Probably the youngster's opinion that her husband was a "comic" still rankled.

"It's time ye wis hame, Macgreegor," said Lizzie, rising.

But Macgregor heard none of the foregoing observations. With a dreamy

look in his eyes, he was listening intently. "I hear it, I hear it," he muttered.

"He's no' hauf wauken yet," said Mrs. M'Ostrich.

"Whit dae ye hear, daurlin'?" inquired Mrs. Bowley.

Macgregor rubbed his eyes again. "I hear it! . . . It's in the hoose! . . . It's ben the hoose! . . . Paw, tak' me ben till I see the big grumphy!"

For a moment there was a dead silence. But laughter was inevitable. Poor Mrs. M'Ostrich, her face crimson, had to join in, but, as Mrs. Bowley remarked to a friend next day, she was evidently "sair pit oot."

As for Lizzie, after a hasty apology and good-bye, she hurried John from the house, and never opened her mouth till they were in their own kitchen. On the departure of Mrs. M'Farlane, who had taken good care of wee Jeannie, Macgregor, three parts asleep, was put to bed with scant ceremony, after which Lizzie collapsed into a chair and looked long at her husband.

"Weel?" she said, at last.

"Weel, Lizzie?" he returned, trying to smile. "Ye've had yer nicht oot."

"Ay. An' it's the last!"

"Toots, havers!"

"John, I've been affrontit afore, but never like the nicht. Macgreegor—"

"Aw, the wean didna mean ony hairm. He sud ha'e been tell't aboot Mrs. M'Ostrich's man."

"Oh, ye've aye an excuse fur Macgreegor. I'm—I'm naebody!"

"Lizzie, wumman!" He got up and went beside her. "Ye're jist a boney wee blether."

"Ah, I'm no' to be cajoled that wey, John."

John said nothing; but he tried several other ways, and did succeed in "cajoling" her at last. She heaved a great sigh and smiled back to him.

"But, dearie, whit are we to dae wi' the wean?" she asked.

"Guid kens," said John.

And suddenly they both fell a-laughing.

X

"I DINNA think I'll gang oot the day, John," said Lizzie. "Wee Jeannie's that girny. I doot I'll ha'e to gi'e her ile, puir doo. Ye sudna ha'e gi'ed her thon bit kipper last nicht."

"Och, Lizzie, it was jist a tate the size o' yer nail."

"Weel, ye ken fine she's ower wee fur kippers, John. An' ye ken I wudna gi'e her that kin' o' meat masel'. I'm shair ye micht ha'e mair sense nor to gi'e her everythin' she cries fur. But it canna be helpit noo."

"I'm rale vexed, wumman," said John. "I think I'll bide in the hoose. I'm no' heedin' aboot gaun oot the day."

"Na, na, John. Ye've got to tak' Macgreegor to the baun', fur ye promised the wean."

"Tak' Macgreegor yersel', Lizzie, an' I'll mind wee Jeannie."

"Toots, havers! Ye see I'm no' jist shair if it wis the kipper that done it, sae ye needna be blamin' yersel' aboot wee Jeannie."

"Dae ye think it wisna the kipper?" said John, eagerly.

"Maybe it wisna. Onywey, I ken whit to dae; sae aff ye gang wi' Macgreegor. . . . Macgreegor, ha'e ye washed yer face?"

"Ay, maw."

"Weel, bring ower the brush till I pit yer hair stracht. . . . Staun' quate noo! Tits, laddie! hoo can I mak' a shed when ye're wagglin' yer heid? . . . There, noo! . . . Let me see yer haun's. Did ye wash them?"

"Ay, maw."

"Awa' an' wash them again. An' tie yer lace. . . . Here, John, keep yer e'e on wee Jeannie till I get Macgreegor's new hat." Lizzie dived under the bed, opened a box, and brought out a parcel.

"Whit kin' o' bunnet's that?" inquired her husband.

"Wait an' ye'll see," returned Lizzie, smiling as she undid the paper. "The man said it wis an Alpine hat, an' vera

genteel. Macgreegor's needin' a new hat. His glengarry's gettin' kin' o' shabby fur the Sawbath, sae he'll wear it every day an' ha'e this yin fur his guid yin. See? There's the hat, John. It 'll be a fine surprise fur Macgreegor. . . . Here, Macgreegor, come an' see yer new hat."

"It's a queer kin' o' hat fur a wean," remarked John. "It's liker a man's. Dod, it's jist like auld Mackinky's—him that used to write til the newspapers efter he gaed daft. A Macalpine hat, did ye say? Macgreegor, let's see ye in yer Macalpine hat!"

But Macgregor, who had been gazing dumbly at the headgear for fully half a minute, suddenly exclaimed, "I'll no' wear that thing."

"Noo ye've done it!" said Lizzie, in a sharp undertone to her husband. "Ye've pit the wean aff it wi' yer stupid talk. . . . Macgreegor, ma mannie," she said to the boy, "yer paw wis jist jokin'. See, pit on yer braw new hat, an' then ye'll gang to the baun'."

"I'll no' wear it," said her son, retreating a step. "I want ma green-garry bunnet."

"Ah, but this yin's faur nicer nor yer glengarry. . . . Is 't no'?" she demanded of John, giving him a warning glance.

"Aw, it's a vera nice hat," he replied, evasively. Then, feeling that he was failing in his duty, he gently recommended his son to submit. "Come awa', Macgreegor, an' dae whit yer maw bids ye."

"I'll no' wear it," said Macgregor, stolidly.

"Ye'll no', wull ye no'?" exclaimed Lizzie. "If ye'll no', ye'll jist!" And, taking the boy by the arm, she gently but firmly placed the hat upon his head.

At this indignity tears sprang to his eyes; but he cuffed them away, and stood before his parents an exceedingly sulky little figure.

"It's the brawest hat he ever had," said Lizzie, regarding her purchase with intense satisfaction. "Is 't no', John?"

"Ay; it's a vera braw hat," replied John, with feeble enthusiasm. "Dae ye think it fits him, though?" he inquired.

"Fits him? Deed, ay! It's like as if his heid had been made fur 't! . . . Is it no' rale comfortable, Macgreegor?"

"I dinna like it," replied the boy. "I like ma greengarry."

"Och, ye'll shin get to like it, dearie. Ye micht gang to see the king wi' a hat like that on yer heid. . . . Noo, awa' wi' yer paw to the baun', an' be a guid laddie, an' ye'll get somethin' nice to yer tea."

"Come on, Macgreegor," said John, holding out his hand. "You an' me 'll ha'e a hurl on the caur, an' maybe ye'll fin' oot whit I've got in ma pooch."

Lizzie nodded pleasantly as they departed, and John looked back and smiled, while Macgregor, though subdued, was apparently becoming reconciled to his novel headgear. During the car journey the twain were perhaps quieter than usual, but by the time they reached the park, where the band was playing, John had ceased casting covert glances at his boy's head, and Macgregor, with a portion of "taiblet" in each cheek, was himself again.

Macgregor greatly enjoyed the loud and lively passages in the music, but he was inclined to be rather impatient while the conductor waved his baton

slowly and the instruments played softly or were partly silent.

"Paw, whit wey is thon man no' blawin' his trumpet?" he inquired, during a lull among the brasses.

"I cudna say, Macgreegor."

"If I had a trumpet I wud aye blaw it. I wud blaw it hard, tae!"

John was about to assure his son that he fully believed him, when he heard some one behind say:

"Jist luk at that, Mrs. Forgie! Is that no' an awful daft-like hat to pit on a laddie?"

"It is that, Mrs. Bawr. I wudna let a laddie o' mine's gang oot in a thing like that fur a' the gold o' Crusoes."

John's ears tingled, and he nearly bit the end off his pipe. "Macgreegor, I think we'll gang roon and see the drummer," he said.

"Naw, I want to see thon man blaw his trumpet," said Macgregor, who, fortunately, had not heard his critics.

"Some folk," observed Mrs. Bawr, "is gey fond o' tryin' to be gentry."

"Ye're richt there," assented Mrs. Forgie, with a sniff. "I'm aye sorry

fur weans that gets drest up like wauxworks, jist fur to please their sully faythers an' mithers."

"Macgreegor," said John, "I'm no' gaun to wait fur the man to blaw his trumpet. I doot he jist cairries it fur show. Come awa' wi' me." And, much to his surprise, the youngster was dragged away.

From that moment John's pleasure was at an end. Every smile he observed, every laugh he heard, seemed to have a personal application. Before the band performance was finished he and his son were on their way home, himself in mortal terror lest the boy should suffer insult. His worst fears were soon realized.

On the roof of the car Macgregor was chattering gayly when an intoxicated party inquired, with a leer, if he were aware that his hat was bashed. Macgregor shrunk close to his father, whose wrath all but boiled over, and was very subdued for the rest of the journey.

As they walked along the street they were met by two small boys, who grinned at their approach, and laughed

loudly behind their backs. John gripped the little fingers a thought closer, but held his peace.

Presently a juvenile voice behind them yelled, "Wha dee'd an' left ye the bunnet?" And another exclaimed, "Gentry pup!"

"Never heed, Macgreegor," whispered John.

"I—I'm no' heedin', paw," said the boy, tremulously.

Three little girls passed them, and broke into a combined fit of giggling. One cried "Granpaw!" after them, and the trio ran up a close.

But they were nearly home now, and surely the torment was at an end. But no! At the corner of the street appeared Willie Thomson and several other of Macgregor's playmates. They did not mean to be unkind, but at the sight of their little friend they stared for a moment, and then fled sniggering. And from a window above came a jeering hail, "Haw, you wi' the fancy hat!" followed by the impertinent exhortation, "Come oot the bunnet an' let's see yer feet." Finally, as they hurried into the

familiar entry, a shout came after them, in which the word "gentry" was cruelly distinct. Climbing the stairs, John wiped the perspiration of shame and wrath from his forehead, while his son emitted strange, half-choked sounds.

"Never heed, Macgreegor, never heed," whispered John, patting the heaving shoulders. "Ye'll no' wear it again, if I've to buy ye a dizzen bunnets."

They entered the house.

"Ye're early back," said Lizzie, cheerfully.

"Ay, we're early back," said her husband, in a voice she was not familiar with.

"Mercy me! Whit's a-do?" she cried. "Whit ails ye, Macgreegor?"

For a moment there was dead silence. Then Macgregor dashed his new hat on the floor. "I'll no' wear it! I'll no' wear it! I winna be gentry! I winna be gentry!" he moaned, and rushed from the house, sobbing as if his heart would break.

"De'il tak' the hat!" said John, and, lifting his foot, he kicked it across the

kitchen, over the jaw-box, and out at the open window.

Lizzie stared at her husband in consternation, and wee Jeannie, not knowing what else to do, started screaming at the top of her voice.

"Ha'e ye gaed daft, John?" gasped Lizzie, at last.

"Gey near it," he replied. "See, Lizzie," he continued, "that hat's to be left in the street, an' yer no' to say a word aboot it to Macgreegor. Listen!" And he proceeded to supply her with details.

"But it's a bewtiful hat, an' that genteel, an' I peyed—" she began ere he had finished.

"I'm no' carin' whit ye peyed fur 't. I'd shinner loss a week's pey nor see Macgreegor in anither Macalpine hat, or whitever ye ca' it. . . . Aw, Lizzie, if ye had jist seed the wey the puir laddie tried fur to keep frae greetin' when they wis makin' a mock o' him, ye wud—"

"Here, John, haud wee Jeannie," said Lizzie, abruptly. "I maun see whit's come ower him. . . . Dinna greet,

duckie. See if ye can keep her quate, John."

Lizzie was absent for a few minutes, and returned looking miserable. "I canna see him, John. Ye micht gang doon yersel'. He's maybe hidin' frae me," she said, with a sigh.

"Nae fear o' that, dearie. But he disna like folk to see him greetin'. That's why I didna rin efter him at first. But I'll awa' an' see if I can get him noo. An'—an', Lizzie, ye'll no' say onythin' aboot the hat? I'll bring it up, if ye want to keep it."

"Na. I'll no' say onythin', but it's a rale braw hat, an' that genteel, an' I doot somebody's rin aff wi' 't."

Just then Macgregor walked in, looking rather ashamed of himself, and with the tears scarcely dry. Yet, at the tenderly solicitous expressions of his parents, he smiled as if he had been waiting permission to do so.

"Paw, there's a—"

"Gi'e yer maw a kiss," said John.

"Ye're an awfu' laddie," murmured Lizzie, cuddling him.

"Paw, there's a wee—"

"Wud ye like a curran'-cake to yer tea, Macgreegor?" inquired Lizzie, as she released him.

"Ay, maw," he answered, beaming. Then: "Paw, there's a wee dug ootbye, an' it's worryin' ma hat, an' it's pu'in' it a' to bits!"

XI

"CAN I get oarin', paw?" said Macgregor from the stern, where he was sitting beside his mother and little sister.

"Dod, ay; ye'll get oarin'," replied his father, who was rowing leisurely and enjoying his pipe.

"Na; ye canna get oarin'," exclaimed Lizzie.

"Whit wey, maw?"

"Jist because ye canna. Keep yer sate, noo, or ye'll ha'e the boat coupit."

"Aw, the wean's fine," said John. "If he wants to get oarin', let him—"

"Macgreegor maun bide whaur he is," returned Lizzie. "Near a' the accidents i' the papers comes o' folk changin' their sates. An' ye ken fine, John, I wudna ha'e come wi' ye the day if ye hadna tell 't me there wud be nae cairry-ons in the boat."

"Och, ye're awfu' easy frichtit," remarked her husband, good-humoredly.

"Ay; I'm easy frichtit. Whit wud I dae wi' wee Jeannie if the boat wis capsizin'? I'm fur nae wattery graves, thenk ye, John!"

"Havers, wumman! Come on, Macgreegor, an' I'll learn ye to—"

"Dinna stir a fit, Macgreegor, or I'll—"

"I want to get oarin', maw."

"Weel, I'm tellin' ye ye canna get oarin'; an' that's jist a' aboot it! Luk at wee Jeannie, noo, an' her that nice an' quate. She's no' wantin' to get oarin' an' ha'e us a' droondit—are ye, ma doo?"

Wee Jeannie continued to apply herself to a stick of barley-sugar, and said nothing.

"She's ower wee fur to oar," said Macgregor, scornfully. "Whit wey can I no' get oarin', maw?"

"Michty me! Can ye no' tak' a tellin', laddie? See the yatts thonder! See thon big yin wi' the yella lum!"

"It's no' a lum; it's a funnel," returned Macgregor, coldly.

"Aweel, it's a' yin," said his mother, agreeably. "See thon steamboat comin' to the pier! Whit a reek. It's got yella lums—funnels—tae."

"I like rid funnels better nor yella yins. Can I get oarin' noo, maw?"

"Tits, Macgreegor! I wunner at ye gaun on aboot oarin' when I've tell't ye ye canna. A fine job it wud be if ye coupit the boat an' a whale got the haud o' ye!"

"There's nae whales at Rothesay."

"Is there no'?"

"Granpaw said there was nane; an' he kens."

John chuckled. "He had ye there, Lizzie," he said. "Ye canna doot yer ain feyther's word."

"Aweel," said Lizzie, "there may be nae whales as a rule, but nae man kens whit's in the sea, as Solyman says."

"Whales is feart fur folk," observed her son.

"The whale wisna feart fur puir Jonah, Macgreegor."

"If I had been Jonah—"

"Ye wud jist ha'e been ett up fur forty days and forty nichts."

"I wudna!"

"Ah, but ye wud! An' it wudna be vera nice in the whale's inside."

"I wud ha'e jaggit it wi' knifes an' preens till it let me oot," said the valiant Macgregor.

John laughed loudly, and Lizzie said, reprovingly: "Ye sudna laugh when Macgreegor says sic daft-like things. Ye jist encourage him wi' his blethers an' boastin'. . . . Macgreegor, I tell ye, if ye wis in the whale's inside ye wud jist be roarin' an' greetin' fur yer maw."

"I wudna!"

"Ay, wud ye! Sae ye needna be boastin' aboot knifes an' preens."

"Wis Jonah roarin' an' greetin' fur his maw, maw?"

"Ach, haud yer tongue! See thon wee boat wi' the sail."

"Whit wey has this boat no' got a sail, maw?"

"It's got nae mast, ye see, Macgreegor," said his father.

"Whit wey has it no' got a mast, paw?"

"Weel, ma mannie, it's jist a boat fur oarin'," said John.

"Can I get oarin' noo?" asked Macgregor.

"I'm shair I've tell't ye a dizzen times ye canna," cried his mother, who was engaged in fixing a fresh bit of paper to one end of wee Jeannie's barley-sugar.

"When 'll I get oarin'?"

"No' the noo, onywey."

"Wull I get oarin' in a wee while, maw?"

"Ye'll no' get oarin' the day, sae ye needna be—"

"Wull I get oarin' the morn, maw?"

"Oh, my! Wis there ever sic a wean! Deed, Macgreegor, ye wad spile the patients o' Job! Whit are ye wantin' to oar fur?"

"I jist want to oar."

"Let him oar, Lizzie," said John, mildly.

"Na, I'll no' let him oar! An' I think ye micht ha'e mair sense nor to say 'let him oar' when I've tell't him fifty times he canna get oarin'."

"But the wean's that disappintit," urged her husband.

"Better disappintit nor droondit,"

quoth Lizzie, shortly. "Whaur are ye gaun noo, John?" she suddenly inquired.

"Oot to get thon steamboat's waves," he returned, laying down his pipe and bending to the oars.

"Whit's that ye say?"

"I'm gaun to tak' ye oot to get a wee shoogy-shoo wi' thon steamboat's waves."

"I'm fur nane o' yer shoogy-shoos, John."

"Whit fur no'? Macgreegor likes a shoogy-shoo. Eh, Macgreegor?"

"Ay, paw," replied Macgregor, roused from apparently gloomy reflections. "I like when the boat's whumlin' aboot."

"I'll whumle ye!" cried his mother. "Noo, John, ye're no' to dae 't. We'll get sookit into the paiddles, as shair 's daith!"

"Nae fears, wumman."

"Ah, but there is fears! I'm no' wantin' to get ma heid an' ma airms an' ma legs ca'ed aff, an' droondit furbye!"

"Wud the paiddles ca' wur heids aff?" inquired Macgregor, with interest.

"They wud that," said Lizzie, relieved to see her husband altering his course.

"An' wud wur heids gang intil the ingynes?" pursued the youngster.

"Oh, haud yer tongue, Macgreegor!" cried his horrified mother. "Whit a notion fur a wean!" she observed to John.

"Paw, wud wur heid's gang—"

"Whisht, laddie!" said his father. "Yer maw disna like it."

"Whit wey?"

Getting no answer, he relapsed into a thoughtful silence, which lasted for about three minutes.

"Can I no' get oarin' noo?" he inquired.

"Here's a boat wi' a rid funnel comin'," said John.

"Can I no' get—"

"Dod, there's an' awfu' crood on board her. D' ye see the folk, Macgreegor?"

"Ay. But can I no'—"

"Ha'e, Macgreegor," said Lizzie, who had been fumbling in her pocket, "there's a lozenger fur ye."

"Thenk ye, maw," he returned, and remained quiet for a little.

Then, "Ma fit's sleepin'!" he exclaimed. "I want to dance."

"Ye canna dance here," said his mother. "Rub yer leg an' dunt yer fit on the floor. But dinna get aff yer sate."

Macgregor rubbed and dunted for some time, but without obtaining relief. "It's fu' o' preens an' needles, an' it's gettin' waur," he complained.

"Weel, ye maun jist thole it, fur ye canna get up an' dance in the boat," said Lizzie, not unsympathetically. "Try wagglin' yer leg, dearie."

Macgregor waggled violently, but to little purpose. His countenance expressed extreme discomfort. "It's awfu' jaggy," he said several times.

"Puir laddie," said his father. "It's a nesty thing a sleepin'-fit. Is 't no', Lizzie?"

"Ay, I mind I yinst had it in the kirk, an' I wis near dementit. Is 't no' gettin' better, Macgreegor?"

"Naw; it's gettin' waur, maw."

The parents became quite concerned about the sufferer.

"I doot ye'll ha'e to gang to the shore, John," said Lizzie, "an' let him get streetchin' hissel'!"

"Ay, he's got crampit wi' sittin' there sae lang. Weans isna used to sittin' quate. Is 't rale bad, ma mannie?"

"A' ma leg's jaggy noo," replied the boy.

"Lizzie," said John, suddenly, "if the wean wis gettin' oarin' fur a wee, dae ye no' think—"

"Na, na. I canna thole folk gallivantin' aboot in boats. Mercy me! there's folk droondit every day jist wi' changin' their sates."

"I cud creep to the ither sate, maw," said Macgregor, who had suddenly ceased rubbing, dunting, and waggling.

"An' he's ower wee, furbye," objected Lizzie.

"I'm no', maw. Wullie Thomson's wee'er nor me, an' he aye gets oarin'."

"Is yer fit better?" asked Lizzie.

"Naw," said her son, hastily resuming operations. "Wullie Thomson's maw lets him oar," he added.

"I suppose ye wud shinner ha'e Wullie's maw nor yer ain," she said, glancing at her husband.

Apparently Macgregor did not hear.

"D' ye hear whit yer maw's sayin',

Macgreegor?" said John. "She's speirin' if ye wud like Mrs. Thomson fur yer maw instead o' hersel'."

"Nae fears," said Macgregor, promptly. "I like ma ain maw best."

"Ye're an awfu' laddie," sighed Lizzie. "Wull ye be rale canny if I let ye get oarin'?"

XII

OLD Mr. Purdie placed his closed hands behind his back, and, with a twinkle in his eye, delivered himself of the ancient rhyme—

> "Neevy, neevy, nick nack,
> Which haun' will you tak'?
> Tak' the richt, or tak' the wrang,
> An' I'll beguile ye if I can!"

"I'll tak' the richt, granpaw," said Macgregor.

Mr. Purdie extended the member mentioned, disclosing a slab of toffee done up in transparent paper. "Ye're a rale smairt laddie," he observed, with a chuckle. "Ye aye guess whaur the gundy is."

"Ay, I'm gey fly," returned Macgregor, modestly, beginning an onslaught on the sweet.

Mr. Purdie chuckled again, and slipped the packet of toffee which had

been concealed in his left hand into his pocket.

"I'm aye richt, am I no'?" inquired his grandson.

"Ay, are ye, Macgreegor! It bates me to think hoo ye ken."

"Aw, I jist ken. . . . It's awfu' guid!"

"Is it?"

"Ay. I'll gi'e ye a taste."

"Na, na," said Mr. Purdie, looking pleased. "I'll jist ha'e a bit smoke to masel'. Ye're no' to tell yer maw I wis gi'ein' ye gundy, though; an' yer no' to let it spile yer tea."

"I'll never let bug, granpaw," said Macgregor, as if to set his relative's guilty conscience at rest.

The twain had come down to the shore at low water, and Mr. Purdie was resting on a rock, while Macgregor hunted among the stones and sea-weed for small crabs, several of which he had secured already and confined in an old battered meat tin.

"Noo, dinna get yer feet wat, laddie," said Mr. Purdie when he had got his pipe, a highly seasoned clay, well alight.

"Nae fears, granpaw," returned the

boy, reassuringly. As a matter of fact, his feet at the very moment were squelching in his boots. "Here's anither!" he exclaimed, holding up a tiny crab. "It's awfu' kitly," he added, as he allowed it to run on the palm of his hand. "It's ower wee fur to nip. Wud ye like to fin' it in yer haun', granpaw?"

"Deed, ay," said Mr. Purdie, with the desire to please his grandson. "Ay, it's gey an' kitly. An' whit are ye gaun to dae wi' a' thae partins?" he inquired, indicating the meat tin.

"I'm gaun to tak' them hame."

"No' to Glesca?"

"Ay, to Glesca!"

"Aw, but they'll jist dee, Macgreegor."

"Whit wey?"

"Partins winna leeve in Glesca."

"Whit wey wull they no'?"

"They need saut watter."

"I'll tak' saut watter hame, tae. I'll tak' it in a botle, granpaw."

Mr. Purdie shook his head, and the boy looked disappointed.

"Whit wud ye dae wi' partins in Glesca?" asked the former.

"Naethin'."

"An' whit wud ye tak' them hame fur?"

"It wisna fur masel'. I'm no' heedin' aboot partins. I wud be feart fur them growin' big an' creepin' intil ma bed. It wis wee Joseph wantit partins."

"Wha's wee Joseph?"

"He's a wee laddie. He's faur wee-er nor me, an' he's lyin' badly, an' his paw's deid, an' his maw washes."

"Ay, ay. An' sae wee Joseph wantit ye to bring him partins?"

"He wantit a monkey first; he thocht there wis monkeys at Rothesay, sclimmin' up the rocks an' rinnin' aboot the pier an' the shore. Wee Joseph's never seen the sea."

"That's peetifu'. An' ye tell 't him there wis nae monkeys?"

"Ay; an' he begood fur to greet. An' I tell 't him aboot the partins, an' he said he wud like a wheen partins, an' —an' I thocht the partins wud leeve in Glesca, an'—an'—I'll jist tim them oot an' bash them wi' a stane."

"Na, na. Ye mauna dae that, Macgreegor," exclaimed Mr. Purdie, hastily.

"The puir beasties canna help no' bein' able to leeve in Glesca."

"I'll bash them," cried Macgregor, violently.

"Haud on, laddie, haud on. If ye wis a wee partin, hoo wud ye like if a big laddie cam' an' bashed ye wi' a stane?"

"If I wis a partin, I wud leeve in Glesca." And the youngster's eyes moved in search of a suitable stone.

"Macgreegor," implored the old man, laying his pipe on the rock and rising, "dae ye think wee Joseph wud like ye to bash the partins?"

"Ay, wud he."

"I'm shair he wudna. The puir wee partins never done onybody hairm."

Macgregor picked up a small bowlder, remarking, "Partins nips folks' taes when they're dookin'."

"Ay; but no' wee partins like thur."

"Thae wee yins 'll shin be big," said Macgregor, coldly. "I'll bash this yin first," he added, selecting a poor little specimen from the tin and laying it on the rock.

Grandfather Purdie seized the uplift-

ed arm. "Macgreegor," he said, gently, "ye're no' to dae it."

"Whit wey?"

"Because," said the old man, searching for an argument that might appeal to the young savage—"because it's sic a wee bit thing."

"It's gey wee," admitted Macgregor, peering into the tin while the victim slid off the rock and escaped; "ay, it's gey wee. Here's a bigger yin. I'll bash it."

"Macgreegor," said Mr. Purdie, solemnly, "ye mauna be crool. Ye wudna like if a muckle giant got a grup o' yersel', an' wis gaun to bash ye wi' his club."

"It's a' lees aboot giants. There's nae giants."

"Aweel, ye're no' to be crool onywey," said Mr. Purdie, at a loss. "Let the wee partins rin awa', an' dinna vex yer granpaw. The wee beasties is that happy, ye ken, an' it wud be a sin to bash them. They're jist like weans doon at the coast fur the fair, rinnin' aboot an' enjoyin' theirsel's, an' they'll be awfu' obleeged to ye fur no' bashin' them."

The old man had evidently struck the right chord at last, for Macgregor dropped the stone and said, "Weel, I'll no' bash them, granpaw."

"That's a fine laddie."

"An' I'll let them awa'," he added, turning the tin upside down.

Mr. Purdie patted the boy's cheek. "I kent ye wudna be crool," he said, tenderly. "Here anither bit gundy fur yer gab."

"Thenk ye, granpaw."

"An' ye'll never think o' bashin' partins again, Macgreegor?"

"Naw. But—but wee Joseph 'll be unco sorry."

"Aha! But we'll ha'e to see aboot somethin' fur wee Joseph. Whit d' ye think he wud like?"

"He wantit somethin' that wis leevin'."

"Leevin'? Dod, that's no' sae easy," said Mr. Purdie, resuming his seat and pipe and gazing thoughtfully across the bay. "I ken a man here that keeps birds," he remarked at last. "Wud wee Joseph like a bird, think ye?"

"Naw," Macgregor firmly and unhesitatingly replied.

"A bird wud be a nice pet fur a laddie that's lyin' badly. It wud cheep an' sing til him, ye ken."

"Birds is ower easy kill't. Ye canna play wi' birds in yer bed."

"Deed, that's true. . . . Whit think ye o' a wee cat? Mrs. M'Conkie the grocer's got kittens the noo."

"Joseph had a wee cat, an' it scartit his neb, an' his maw pit it oot the hoose. He had white mice anither time, an' they had young yins, but his maw wudna let him keep them in the bed."

"Weel," said Mr. Purdie, "I'm shair I dinna ken whit to say, Macgreegor."

"The partins wis best, if they wud ha'e leeved. Wee Joseph wis fur keepin' them in a boax, an' him an' me wis gaun to mak' them rin races on the blanket. Maybe they wud catch their feet in the oose, though."

"I doot they wud, puir beasties. . . . But I'm fear't we canna get Joseph onythin' that's leevin'."

Macgregor looked depressed, whereat his grandfather sighed helplessly and let his pipe go out.

"Ye see, laddie, there's no' mony

things ye can gi'e til a wean that's lyin' badly," said the old man. "Wull Joseph be better shin?"

"Naw. It's his back that hurts him. He's awfu' bad whiles. I wudna like to be him."

"That's maist peetifu'. I'll tell ye whit we'll dae, Macgreegor."

"Whit, granpaw?"

"We'll ha'e a keek at the shopes afore we gang hame to wur tea, an' ye'll maybe see somethin' that wud please him."

"Wull we gang noo?" exclaimed the youngster, brightening.

Mr. Purdie consulted a fat silver watch. "Ay, we'll gang noo, an' see whit we can see. Gi'e's yer haun', Macgreegor. . . . Hech, sirs! but ye're no' to gar me rin. I'm no' as soople as yersel', ma mannie. Mind yer feet, or we'll baith be tum'lin' on the slippy places."

Without mishap, however, they came to the road, and soon reached the town, Mr. Purdie "pechin" and Macgregor beaming with anticipation.

At a window which seemed to be stocked with all the toys and trifles in creation they paused and gazed.

"Ha'e," said Mr. Purdie, producing his purse, "there's a thrupny-bit. Jist tak' per pick, Macgreegor."

"Thenk ye, granpaw. Oh, whit 'll I buy?"

"Wud ye no' like to buy thon braw joog wi' the pictur' on it?"

"Naw."

"I'm thinkin' it wud be a nice kin' o' thing fur Joseph. Ye see it's got 'A Present frae Rothesay' on it; an' he wud like gettin' his tea oot o' it. Eh?"

"Naw."

"Aweel, ye maun please yersel'. There's a pent-boax, noo. Wud Joseph like to pent, think ye?"

"Naw. I like pentin'—I'm gaun to be a penter when I'm a man. But I'm gaun to ha'e pots o' pent an' big dauds o' potty."

"Weel, maybe wee Joseph—"

"Naw."

"There's a pretty pictur'-book," said Mr. Purdie. "Dae ye think—"

"Naw."

The old man gave up.

"I'll buy thon trumpet," cried the boy at last.

I doot, when wee Joseph's lyin' badly, he'll no' be vera fit to blaw a trumpet."

"I cud blaw it fur him, granpaw. I can blaw rale hard."

"Ay, but I'm feart wee Joseph michtna like that."

"Whit wey?"

Mr. Purdie was about to attempt explaining, when suddenly Macgregor gave vent to a cry of delight. "See — oh, see! there's a monkey hingin' in the corner!"

"Haste ye an' buy it," said his grandfather, laughing.

Macgregor required no second bidding, and a couple of minutes later he was exhibiting his purchase. It was an earthenware monkey that bounded merrily at the end of a piece of elastic. "It's gey near leevin', is 't no'?" he demanded. "See it loupin'!" And he continued to play with it until they were nearly home.

"Wee Joseph 'll be unco gled to see it. It 'll gar him lauch, puir laddie," said Mr. Purdie.

"Ay," assented Macgregor, without

much animation. For the moment he had somehow forgotten all about wee Joseph. He wound the elastic carefully about the monkey's neck, and walked on in silence.

"Ye'll like gi'ein' it to the puir laddie," said Mr. Purdie, glancing down.

"Ay," answered Macgregor in a husky whisper.

XIII

THE Robinson family were spending the week end at old Mr. Purdie's Rothesay residence, but, much to their disappointment, the weather had completely broken down an hour after their arrival. Macgregor stood at the window, gazing disconsolately at the misty bay, while his elders—wee Jeannie having been put to bed—talked of matters which seemed to him totally void of interest.

"Can I get gaun ootbye noo?" he inquired at last of his mother, who was busily knitting and talking to Grandma Purdie.

Lizzie glanced at the window. "Deed, Macgreegor, ye needna be speirin' aboot gaun oot the nicht."

"It's no' sae wat noo, maw."

"I'm thinkin' it cudna be muckle waur, dearie. Ye wud be fair drookit in hauf a meenit. Jist content yersel'

in the hoose, an' ye'll maybe get a fine day the morn."

"I want to gang to the pier an' see the steamboats comin' in, maw."

"Aweel, I'm rale vexed fur ye, but ye're no' gaun ower the door the nicht. Whaur's yer graun' pictur'-book?"

"I seen a' the picturs."

"Puir laddie," said Grandma Purdie, "it's no' vera cheery fur him sittin' in the hoose a' nicht. John, can ye no' divert the wean a wee? Gi'e him a bit ride on yer fit, man."

"Come on, Macgreegor!" his father cried, willingly. "Come awa' and ha'e a ride on ma fit."

"Ach, he's ower big fur that kin' o' gemm," said Grandpa Purdie, noticing that Macgregor did not appear to appreciate the invitation. "Are ye no', ma mannie?"

"Ay," muttered Macgregor.

"Wud ye like to build hooses wi' the dominoes?" inquired the old gentleman.

Macgregor shook his head.

"Weel, wud ye like to build castels wi' the draughts?"

Macgregor shook his head again, and

looked gloomier and more ill-used than ever.

"I ken whit Macgreegor wud like," put in John. "Him an' me kens a fine gemm. I'll be a draygon, an' hide in ma den ablow the table, and Macgreegor 'll hunt me. I'll mak' him a spear oot o' ma *Evenin' Times*, an' he'll stab me till I'm deid. Eh, Macgreegor?"

"Fine!" exclaimed Mr. Purdie.

"Preserve us a'!" cried Mrs. Purdie.

"Oh, John and Macgreegor whiles ha'e fine gemms at the draygon," said Lizzie, pleasantly. "But it's unco sair on John's breeks; an' he's got on his guid claes the nicht. . . . Pu' them up a wee, John, sae as no' to spile the knees."

"A' richt, wumman," replied John, as he rolled his newspaper into a harmless weapon. Presently he handed it to his son, and disappeared under the table, where he covered his head with a red woollen tidy.

"Come on, Macgreegor; I'm ready fur ye noo!" he shouted, and immediately proceeded to emit fearsome noises.

"It bates a'!" Grandma Purdie cried, quite excitedly. "Whit a gemm!"

"John," said Lizzie, "did ye pu' up yer breeks?"

"Hoo can a draygon pu' up breeks?" returned her husband; and he resumed his growlings and groanings, while Macgregor began to stalk his prey with great caution and stealth.

"See an' no' pit oot yer paw's een," said old Mrs. Purdie, a trifle nervously.

"Gi'e the draygon a bit jab, an' gar him come oot his den," said Mr. Purdie. "Dod, if I wis jist a wee thing soopler, Macgreegor, I wud mak' ye anither draygon."

Just then the draygon made a claw at the leg of the hunter, who let out a piercing yell and lunged wildly with his spear, without, however, getting it home. The fun became fast and furious.

"Come oot yer den, ye auld draygon, till I bore a hole in ye!" yelled the bold Macgregor.

"Gurr—gurr!" said the dragon, suddenly appearing on the other side of the table.

At this point the door opened, and Aunt Purdie stepped in. "What's ado, what's ado?" she inquired, rather sourly.

John rose from the floor, trying to look at his ease, and Macgregor, the spirit of play being abruptly chilled, shook hands dutifully with his relative and straightway retired to the window.

Aunt Purdie, whose husband's grocery business was rapidly increasing, had taken rooms in Rothesay, not far from the old folks, for July and August. She was much too superior and proper a person for the Robinsons, and she was Macgregor's pet aversion. As Lizzie was wont to say, she was "rale genteel, but awfu' easy offendit."

"I was intending to go to the pier for to meet Robert," she observed, as she sat down, "but it was that wet I jist came in to wait."

"Ye're rale welcome," said Grandma Purdie, kindly. "Whit boat is Rubbert comin' wi'?"

"Robert is coming in the seven o'clock P.M. train from Glasgow. He cannot leave the shope any earlier the now."

"Weel, he'll no' be compleenin' if trade's guid," said Mr. Purdie, brightly. "He'll ken to come here for ye the nicht, nae doot."

"Yes," said Aunt Purdie. Then turning to Lizzie, but speaking so that every one in the room might hear, she said, "I've jist received a letter from my friend, Mrs. M'Cluny."

"Ha'e ye?" returned Lizzie, politely. She knew that she was about to be treated to news of her sister-in-law's grand acquaintances, in whom she had not the slightest interest.

"M'Cluny!" exclaimed old Mr. Purdie. "Dod, but that's a queer-like name to gang to the kirk wi'! It's liker Gartnavel."

"It is very old Highland," said Aunt Purdie, with dignity.

"Ten year in botle," muttered John, with a snigger, whereat Mr. Purdie slapped his knee and laughed loudly.

"Mrs. M'Cluny," went on Aunt Purdie, "informs me that Dr. M'Cluny has got to leave Glasgow."

"Wha's he been killin'?" asked Mr. Purdie, and John stifled a guffaw.

"Haud yer tongue, man," whispered old Mrs. Purdie, fearing lest her son's wife should take offence, as she had done too often before.

"Dr. M'Cluny," the visitor continued, "has received an appintment in England. It is a very good appintment, but I'm sure I don't know what we are to do wanting Mrs. M'Cluny when the winter season begins."

"Dis she gi'e awa' coals an' blankets?" inquired Mr. Purdie, with a serious face.

The lady glanced at him sharply. "I was referring to Mrs. M'Cluny's social —a—poseetion," she said, stiffly. "We shall miss her greatly at our parties and conversonies. She was that genteel —I might even say autocratic. Her and me is great friends, and we have been often complimented for our arrangements at entertainments when we was on the commytee. Everybody says Mrs. M'Cluny is a capital organism."

"Deed, ye'll jist ha'e to tak' her place when she's awa'," said Mr. Purdie, winking at John.

"Well, I must do my best," returned Aunt Purdie, modestly. "Of course, it has always been against Mrs. M'Cluny that her husband kep' a doctor's shope," she added.

"Bless me, wumman, whit's wrang

wi' that? If a man's gaun to tell folk to tak' pooshun, he micht as weel sell it," cried the old man.

"It is nut conseedered the proper thing by the best people."

"Havers! Ye're ain man keeps a shope."

"A grocery establishment," said Aunt Purdie, "is a very different thing from a doctor's shope. I've never heard tell of a man with a doctor's shope getting a title from the hands of his Royal Majesty."

Mr. Purdie burst out laughing. "Ca' canny, wumman, ca' canny! I doot oor Rubbert's no' the lad to heed aboot titles. Hoots, toots! . . . Come ower here, Macgreegor, an' gi'e's yer crack," he said, anxious to get Aunt Purdie off her high horse.

Macgregor came over from the window and leaned against the old man's knees. "Dae a recite, grandpaw," he whispered.

"Eh? Recite?" The old man was pleased, however. "Weel, I'll gi'e ye a bit readin', if ye like, Macgreegor," he said, putting on his specs and taking an ancient and somewhat battered

Bell's Reciter from a shelf at his elbow.

"Whit 'll I read ye, ma mannie?"

"Read aboot the man that wis lockit in the kist till he wis a—a—a skeletin, an' loupit oot on the ither man."

"'The Uncle'?"

"Ay. I like that yin awfu'," said Macgregor, with a shudder of anticipation.

"Whit's that?" cried Lizzie. "Aw, yer no' to read him that yin, fayther. He had an unco bad nichtmare the last time."

"It wisna the skeletin done it, maw," appealed the boy. "It wis the pease-brose I had to ma supper. I aye dream when I get pease-brose—an' ile."

"He's sleepin' wi' me the nicht," put in John. "Ye'll no' be feart wi' me, wull ye, Macgreegor?"

"Naw."

After some discussion Lizzie reluctantly gave in, and Mr. Purdie proceeded with the reading, which, as a matter of fact, had little interest for Macgregor until the final tragedy was reached. Then, while the old man, short of breath, gasped the lines and gesticulated in

frightsome fashion, did Macgregor stand with rising hair, open mouth, and starting eyeballs, quaking with delicious terror. And hardly had the words "a sinner's soul was lost" left the reader's lips when the boy was exclaiming:

"Dae anither recite, granpaw, dae anither recite!"

"Na, na, laddie. Nae mair."

"Aw, ay. Jist anither. Dae the yin aboot the man that stabbit the ither man wi' a jaggy knife, an' hut him wi' a stane, an' pit him in the watter, an' wis fun' oot, an' got the nick. Dae that yin."

After a little rest Grandpa Purdie was prevailed upon to read "Eugene Aram's Dream," at the close of which he suggested that Macgregor should give a recitation.

"I'll gi'e ye a penny, Macgreegor," he said, encouragingly.

"An' I'll gi'e ye anither," said John.

"An' I've a poke o' mixed ba's," added Grandma Purdie.

"Naw, I canna," said Macgregor.

"Come awa', ye can dae it fine," said his father. "Dae the recite yer maw

teached ye aboot the laddie on the burnin' boat."

"It wis an awfu' job gettin' him to learn it," remarked Lizzie.

"Weel, let's hear a' aboot it," said Mr. Purdie.

"Och, it's a daft recite, an' I canna mind it," returned Macgregor.

"Ah, but we're a' wantin' to hear it," said Grandma Purdie. "Come awa', like a clever laddie."

"Ye can mind it fine," remarked Lizzie. "Ye needna be sae blate."

"I've a thrupny-bit in ma purse," said Mr. Purdie.

"Dod, I've yin, tae," said John.

The bribery was too much for Macgregor. "I'll dae 't!" he exclaimed.

Every one applauded except Aunt Purdie, who muttered something about "bringing up children foolishly." Whereupon Lizzie murmured something about "talkin' o' bringin' up weans when ye hivna got ony," an observation which the other pretended she did not hear.

"I'll no' dae the yin aboot the burnin' boy," said Macgregor, suddenly.

"Weel, dae anither," said his grandfather.

"He disna ken anither," his mother interposed. "It tuk me six month to learn him the—"

"Ay, I ken anither. I learnt it frae Wullie Thomson," her son interrupted.

"Whit's it aboot?"

"I'll no' tell till I recite it."

"Recite it, then."

Macgregor put his hands behind his back, and, after several false starts and giggles, delivered the following:

> "Yin, twa, three—
> My mither catched a flea.
> We roastit it, an' toastit it,
> An' had it to wur tea."

"That's a' I ken," he concluded, bursting out laughing.

His grandparents and his father laughed too, and Lizzie would have joined them had it not been for Aunt Purdie.

With a face of disgust, that lady, holding up her hands, exclaimed, "Sich vulgarity!"

Lizzie appeared to swallow something

before she quietly said: "Micht I be as bold as to speir, Mrs. Purdie, if ye refer to ma son, Macgreegor, or to the words o' the pome he recitit the noo?"

"T—to the words, of course, Mrs. Robison," returned Aunt Purdie, hastily.

"That's a' richt, Mrs. Purdie," Lizzie said, with disagreeable pleasantness. "I'm gled to hear ye referred to the words. H'm! Ay!"

Aunt Purdie opened her mouth, but fortunately the arrival of her husband just then prevented her speaking.

Robert Purdie was a big, genial man, and he had Macgregor up on his shoulder before he had been in the room a minute. The boy loved his uncle, and always associated him with large bags of what are known to some people as "hair-ile" mixtures—softish sweets with pleasing flavors, reminiscent of a barber's saloon.

"Ha'e ye been behavin' yersel', Macgreegor?" inquired Uncle Purdie, presently.

"Ay," replied the youngster, while his aunt glowered.

"Aweel," said the big man, putting him gently on the floor, "awa' an' see whit ye can fin' in ma coat pooch oot in the lobby."

With a cry of rapture Macgregor fled from the parlor. He was sampling the "poke" when his mother joined him, having announced her intention to the company of seeing if wee Jeannie slept. "Dearie, ye're no' to say thon again," she said.

"Whit, maw?"

"Thon pome, dearie."

"Whit wey, maw?"

"Jist because I dinna want ye to say 't."

"Weel, I'll no'," replied Macgregor, with his mouth full.

"That's ma ain laddie."

"Maw, d' ye ken whit I wud like to gi'e Aunt Purdie?"

"A pickle sweeties," suggested Lizzie, trying to smile.

"Naw. I wud like to gi'e her a daud on the neb twicet."

XIV

"AN' a' ye've got to dae," said Lizzie, laying the *Fireside Companion* in her lap and beginning another spell of knitting, "is jist to licht the wee stove, an' the eggs hatches theirsel's. Maist extraornar', is 't no', John?"

"Dod, ay," returned John. "Whit did ye say they ca'ed it, wumman? Cremation o' chickens? Eh?"

"Incubation, John," his wife replied, after a glance at the page. "It's the heat that gars the chickens come oot."

"Whit wey dae the chickens no' come oot when ye bile the eggs, paw?" inquired Macgregor, quitting the square blocks of wood with which he had been building "wee hooses" on the kitchen floor, and advancing to his father's knee.

"Speir at yer maw, Macgreegor," said John, laughing. "Ye're the yin fur questions!"

"Maw, whit wey—"

"I'm thinkin' it's aboot time ye wis in yer bed, dearie," his mother observed.

"But whit wey dae the chickens no'—"

"Aweel, ye see, if they wis comin' oot then they wud shin be droondit," she said, hastily. "Gi'e yer paw a kiss noo, an'—"

"Ay, but whit wey—"

"Bilin' watter wud be ower muckle het fur the puir wee tewkies," she added, seeing that the boy was persistent. "Ye've got to gar the wee tewkies think the auld hen's settin' on them, dearie."

"If I wis to pit an egg on the hob, wud a wee tewky come oot, maw?"

"Na, na! That wud shin roast it. Ye've got to keep it nice an' cosy, but no' ower warm; jist like yersel' when ye're in yer bed. D' ye see?"

"Ay, maw. . . . But I'm no' wearit yet."

"Let him bide a wee, Lizzie," said the indulgent John. "Did ye ever hear tell," he went on with a twinkle in his eye, "o' the hen that fun' an aix an sat on it fur a fortnicht, tryin' fur to hatchet?"

"Hoots!" murmured his wife, smiling to please him.

"Did the hen no' cut itsel', paw?" asked his son, gravely.

"Dod, I never thocht o' that, Macgreegor," his father answered, grinning.

"It was a daft kin' o' hen onywey," said the boy, scornfully.

"Aw, it jist done it fur a bawr," said John, by way of apology.

"Noo, Macgreegor, yer time's up," his mother remarked, with a shake of her head.

"I'm no' wearit, maw."

"Are ye no'? An' whit wey wis ye yawnin' the noo, ma mannie?"

"I wisna yawnin'."

"Whit wis ye daein' then?"

"I—I wis jist openin' ma mooth, maw."

"Och, awa' wi' ye, laddie! Jist openin' yer mooth, wis ye? Deed, yer e'en's jist like twa beads wi' sleep. I seen ye rubbin' them fur the last hauf-'oor. Ay, fine ye ken it's Wee Wullie Winkie, ma dearie."

"Aw, Lizzie, the wean's fine," put in John, as he cut himself a fresh fill of to-

bacco. "Come here, Macgreegor, an' get a wee cuddle afore ye gang to yer bed."

"Na," said Lizzie, firmly. "He'll gang to sleep on yer knee, an' then I'll ha'e a nice job gettin' him to his bed. Here, Macgreegor, till I tak' aff yer collar. . . . Noo, see if ye can louse yer buits. . . . Mercy me! if that's no' anither hole in yer stockin'. Luk at his heel, John. Ye're jist a pair, the twa o' ye! Ye're baith that sair on yer stockin's. If it's no the heels, it's the taes; an' if it's no' the taes, it's the soles; an' if it's no' the soles, it's— Aweel, I've darned them afore, an' I daursay I'll darn them again," she concluded, with a philosophic smile, and stooped to assist Macgregor, who was struggling with a complicated knot in the lace of his second boot.

"John," said Lizzie two mornings later—it happened to be Sunday—"I canna get Macgreegor to rise. He's sayin' he's no' weel."

"Eh!" exclaimed her husband, laying down his razor. "No' weel? I maun see—"

"No' the noo, John. I think he's sleepin' again. But—but wis ye gi'ein' him ony sweeties when ye tuk him ootbye yesterday efternune?"

"Naw, Lizzie. Ye seen a' he got yersel'. Jist thon wee bit taiblet. Is he feelin' seeck?"

"He said he wisna seeck, but jist no' weel. He's no' lukin' ill-like, but I'm no' easy in ma mind aboot him."

"I—I gi'ed him a penny yesterday," said her husband, after an awkward pause.

"Aw, John!"

"But he said he wudna spend it on sweeties—an' I'm shair he didna."

"Maybe he bocht pastry. Whit fur did ye gi'e him the penny?"

"He askit fur it. Maybe he's jist a wee thing wearit, Lizzie."

Mrs. Robinson shook her head and opened a cupboard door.

"Are ye gaun to gi'e him ile?" asked John.

"Ay, when he's wauken. Oh, John, John, ye sud be mair discreet, an' no' gi'e Macgreegor a' he asks fur. But get yer shavin' dune, an' come to yer

breakfast. Ye didna see wee Jeannie's flannen petticoat, did ye? Her red yin, ye ken? I canna lay ma haun' on it, an' I'm shair it was aside her ither claes when we gaed to wur beds."

"Naw, I didna see it," John replied, dully, and sadly resumed his shaving.

"It's maist aggravatin'," murmured Lizzie. "I doot I'm lossin' ma mem'ry. . . . Did ma doo no' get on her braw new flannen petticoat?" she inquired of her daughter, who, however, appeared quite happy in her old garment, sitting on a hassock and piping on a horn spoon which had a whistle in its handle. "Wee Jeannie's breid an' mulk's near ready noo," she added, whereupon wee Jeannie piped with more zest than ever.

After breakfast Lizzie interviewed her son, who was again awake.

"Are ye feelin' better noo, dearie?"

"Naw."

"Whit's like the maitter?"

"I dinna ken. I dinna want to rise, maw."

Lizzie refrained from referring to the penny that had done the harm. "I

doot ye're needin' a taste o' ile," she said.

Macgregor kept a meek silence.

"I'll gi'e ye a wee taste, an' then ye'll maybe try an' tak' yer breakfast."

"I'll try, maw."

He took the dose like a hero, and afterwards made a meal the heartiness of which rather puzzled his mother. Then he said he was going to have another sleep.

"John," said Lizzie, "I canna think whit's wrang wi' Macgreegor. He's baith hungry an' sleepy. I wisht I kent whit he bocht wi' yer penny. I'm feart it wis some kin' o' pooshonous thing. I think I'll gang ower to Mrs. Thomson an' speir if Wullie's a' richt. Wullie an' Macgreegor wis oot thegither last nicht."

"Aye," said John. "Maybe he got somethin' tae eat frae Wullie."

"Maybe, John. . . . If Macgreegor's wauken when I'm awa', ye micht get him to tell ye whit he dune wi' the penny. D' ye see?"

"Ay. . . . I'm rale vexed aboot the penny, wumman."

"Weel, dearie, ye maun try an' be

mair discreet. Ye canna expec' a wean to be fu' o' wisdom, as Solyman says."

Left to himself — Lizzie had taken wee Jeannie with her—John went over to the bed and gazed anxiously upon his son. Presently the boy opened his eyes.

"Weel, ma wee man," said John, with an effort to speak cheerfully, "are ye fur risin' noo?"

"Naw."

"Are ye no' ony better?"

Macgregor languidly signified that he was not.

John cleared his throat. "Whit did ye dae wi' the penny I gi'ed ye?" he asked, gently.

"I spent it."

"Ay. But whit did ye spend it on? Pastry?"

"Naw."

John felt somewhat relieved. "Aweel, tell me whit ye bocht."

"I—I'll tell ye anither time, paw," said Macgregor, after considerable hesitation.

"Did ye get ony sweeties efter yer taiblet yesterday?"

"Naw. . . . Can I get a wee tate taiblet noo, paw?"

"Deed, I doot ye canna. Ye're no' weel."

"Ah, but I'm no' that kin' o' no' weel, paw."

John shook his head sadly, and there ensued a long silence.

"Paw," said Macgregor at last, "hoo lang dae wee tewkies tak' to come oot their eggs?"

"Eh?"

The youngster's face was flushed as he repeated the question.

"I'm no' jist shair, Macgreegor," said John; "but I think the paper yer maw wis readin' said it wis twa-three weeks."

"Oh!" cried Macgregor in such a tone of dismay that his father was startled.

"Whit's wrang, Macgreegor?"

"I think I'll rise noo, paw," the boy remarked, soberly.

"Are ye feelin' better?"

"Ay, I'm better."

"Whit's vexin' ye, ma wee man?" cried John, suddenly, and with great tenderness.

Macgregor gave a small snuff and a

big swallow as his father's arm went round him. "I—I thocht the—the wee tewky wud come oot shin," he murmured, brokenly.

"The wee tewky?"

"Ay. But I—I canna bide in ma b — b — bed twa-three weeks." And then from under the clothes Macgregor cautiously drew a tiny red flannel garment, which he unrolled and laid bare a hen's egg. "I gi'ed ma penny fur it, paw. The grocer tell't me there wis nae tewky in it, but—but I thocht there wis, an' I wis wantin' to—to keep it cosy, an'—an'—"

"Aw, wee Macgreegor!" exclaimed John, realizing it all, but not even smiling.

When Lizzie returned and heard the tale she was sympathetic, but not sentimental.

"I'll jist bile the egg fur yer tea, dearie," she said.

"I wud like it fried, maw," said Macgregor, who was rapidly recovering his spirits.

XV

"AN' whit dae ye say to yer granpaw fur the barra?" inquired Lizzie of her son, who was gazing with sparkling eyes at the small wheelbarrow which Mr. Purdie had just purchased for him.

Macgregor said nothing, but he suddenly flung himself upon the old gentleman and hugged him warmly.

"Hech, laddie!" cried Mr. Purdie, panting and chuckling, "ye'll squeeze a' the breith oot o' me. But I'm rale gled ye like yer barra. Yer granny wis fur gettin' me to buy ye a pictur'-book, but—"

"I like the barra faur better nor a pictur'-book," said Macgregor. "Ye canna gi'e folk hurls in a pictur'-book."

"Deed, that's vera true. Maybe ye wud like to gang ootbye an' gi'e some o' yer wee freen's a bit ride."

"Ay, wud I!" said Macgregor, eagerly.

"Aff ye gang, then," said John, who was looking nearly as pleased as the youngster.

"Och, John," Lizzie put in, "Macgreegor maun bide a wee. It's no' every Setterday efternune his granpaw comes up frae Rothesay."

"Hoots, toots!" exclaimed Mr. Purdie, patting his grandson's head. "The laddie's no' to bide in the hoose fur me. Him an' me 'll ha'e a crack anither time. Eh, Macgreegor?"

"I — I'll bide if ye like, granpaw," Macgregor murmured, casting a longing glance at his new treasure.

"Na, na," the old man returned, with a gratified smile at John and Lizzie. "I'm no' gaun awa' fur an 'oor yet, sae ye've time to try the barra and come back an' tell me if it rins weel."

"Ay, I'll dae that," said Macgregor; and obviously relieved, he departed without delay.

At the close-mouth he encountered a little girl with whom, for some time, he had been familiar in rather a patronizing fashion. On one occasion he had chased

away a small dog which in a playful mood had caused her much alarm, and since then she had regarded him in the light of a hero, and had somewhat embarrassed him with her attentions, for Macgregor was sorely afraid of the chaff of his boy friends, who, with the exception of his chum Willie Thomson, were not slow to make jeering observations when they caught him in the company of his admirer. Therefore, as a rule, he passed her without speaking, or at most with a hurried and awkward reply to her shy but eager remark, made in the fond hope of interesting him.

But with his new wheelbarrow he was in a mightily pleasant humor, and grinned so kindly that the little girl was quite flurried with pride and delight.

"Ha'e!" she said, modestly, presenting a tiny packet.

"Whit's that?" asked Macgregor, accepting and opening it. "Chokelet! Whaur did ye get it?"

"I got it fur gaun a message."

"It's awfu' guid! Did ye get twa bits, Katie?"

"Na. Jist the yin. But—but I'm no' heedin' aboot chokelet."

Macgregor stopped eating. "Pit that in yer gab," he said, handing back half the dainty. "Whit wey did ye gi'e it a' to me?"

"Jist," said Katie.

"See ma new barra!" said Macgregor, at the end of a short silence.

"My!" she exclaimed, admiringly.

"It's an awfu' fine barra!"

"Ay!"

"I got it frae Granpaw Purdie."

"Did ye?"

"Ay, did I! An' I'm gaun to gi'e folks hurls in it."

"My!"

Macgregor reflected for a moment; then remarked, "If ye wis a laddie I wud gi'e ye a hurl."

Katie's bright eyes clouded and her fair head drooped. From a pinnacle of pride she fell into the depths of humiliation. She wanted to say, "I'm no' heedin' aboot hurls!" but her throat tightened and her lip trembled, and she remained speechless.

"Dae ye no' wish ye wis a laddie?" in-

quired Macgregor, bending over his grand possession and making the wheel revolve.

Katie made no response, and the boy rose and looked up and down the street preparatory to making the trial trip. Behind him, Katie raised the hem of her pinafore to her eyes.

Macgregor stepped out of the close and stood on the pavement, gripping the handles. There were few people walking in the street, and not one of his playmates was in sight.

Without turning his head, he said, abruptly, "Come oot, Katie, an' I'll gi'e ye a hurl."

Katie took a step forward and halted.

Macgregor repeated the invitation, with a glance in her direction.

Katie cast down her eyelashes and stood still.

"Are ye no' wantin' a hurl?" he inquired, a trifle impatiently.

"Ay," said Katie, hastily, but without moving.

"Whit wey are ye greetin'?"

"I'm no' greetin'!"

"Ye are so! Ye're greetin' because ye're a lassie. Lassies is aye greetin'."

"They're no' aye greetin'!" she exclaimed, in a flash of indignation. But she was a gentle little soul, and she could not be cross with her hero. "I'll no' greet again," she said, humbly. "An' I wud like a hurl in yer nice barra, if ye please." She was too young to know, and he was too young to see the beauty of her eyes at that moment, but they looked at each other, and their friendship became less one-sided than it had been so far.

"Sit doon in the barra, Katie," said Macgregor, graciously.

"Ye'll no' coup me?" said she, with an inquiring yet confiding glance.

"Nae fears! I'll no' coup ye! Haud yer feet up."

She raised her feet obediently, and pulled her short skirts over the darns on her knees.

"I'll hurl ye to the corner an' back again," said Macgregor.

"Ay," assented Katie, who was holding on to the sides of the vehicle and looking just the least thing afraid.

They set off at a good pace, and when the corner was reached Katie was smil-

ing fearlessly and enjoying the envious stares of several little girls whom she chanced to know. The journey back was all too brief in its duration, and she rose from the barrow with undisguised reluctance. What a splendid thing it was to be "hurled" by her hero!

"Ye're an awfu' strong laddie," she observed, admiringly.

"Ay, I'm gey strong," he returned, trying not to pant.

"It wis awfu' nice!" she murmured, with a little sigh.

Macgregor spat on his hands. "Wud ye like anither hurl?" he asked.

"Ay, wud I. Am I no' ower heavy?"

"Ye're no' heavy ava'. Get into the barra, an' I'll hurl ye to the ither corner. It's faurer."

Away they went again on a journey even more delightful than the first. Children scattered before them, and grown-up people hurriedly skipped against the wall or into the gutter, their varied remarks being unheard or unheeded.

"Ye're awfu' kind!" said Katie when

they stood at the close-mouth once more.

"Och, it's naethin' ava'," returned Macgregor, hot and happy.

"Ah, but ye are awfu' kind. Ither laddies is no' as kind."

"Ay, but ye're rale kind yersel'. An' ye're no' as daft as ither lassies."

It was a rare compliment, and Katie appreciated it too deeply for words. At the end of half a minute she said, softly, "I like ye unco weel. . . . Dae ye like me?"

"Ay," admitted Macgregor.

"Dae ye like me unco weel?"

"Ay. Wull I gi'e ye anither hurl?"

Katie nodded and beamed upon him. She took her place in the barrow, and Macgregor was just about to start off when a heavy paw was laid upon his shoulder, and a disagreeable voice said, "Len's yer barra, an' I'll gi'e the lassie a hurl."

The voice was that of a great, lumpy boy, the terror of the youngsters in the vicinity of Macgregor's abode, a coarse creature, who never herded with fellows of his own size, but prowled about

teasing and bullying the little ones, and even annexing their playthings when it pleased him to do so.

Little Katie looked up in terror. "I'm no' wantin' him to hurl me," she cried to Macgregor, who was white and angry.

"She's no' wantin' ye to hurl her," he said to the bully, who had already grabbed one of the handles.

"I'll gi'e her a faur quicker hurl nor you," said the bully, with an ugly laugh. "Louse yer haun'!"

"I'll no'!"

"I'll shin gar ye louse it."

"I'm no' wantin' to len' ye ma barra," said Macgregor.

Katie rose to her feet. "Dinna len' him it," she said, making a face at the tormentor.

"Gi'e's nane o' yer lip," said the latter. "Get in yersel', Macgreegor," he added, with an attempt at pleasantness, "an' I'll gi'e ye a graun' hurl."

"I'm no' wantin' a hurl frae you," said Macgregor, retreating into the close.

The bully vented some language which need not be repeated, and tried

to jerk the barrow from its owner's grasp. But Macgregor held on gamely, and a desperate struggle occupied about two minutes, during which Katie looked at her hero in fear and trembling, and longed for the appearance of Willie Thomson or another of his friends.

Suddenly there was a nasty cracking sound, and Macgregor was left with one leg of his barrow in his hands, while the bully laughed loudly as he found himself in possession of the remainder.

"Ye've broke ma barra," screamed the youngster, tears of rage and grief starting to his eyes, and he made an onslaught with the sundered leg upon the villain, who at first grinned scornfully, but soon found it necessary to defend himself. Macgregor caught him a nice thwack over the knuckles, causing him to drop the barrow; but a moment later the valiant one was in the other's clutches and being cruelly cuffed.

Katie could bear no more. With a cry of childish wrath, she fell upon the bully from behind, and put in some really effective work with her hands and feet. Still, the battle might have been

to the strong had not Willie Thomson appeared on the scene. Willie was not muscular, but he had an idea. Signing to Katie to keep clear, he suddenly grabbed the bully's right leg, and brought him to the ground with Macgregor on top. The latter shook himself free, and stood up a sorry picture.

The bully rose with a roar, and made for Willie Thomson, who dashed off, and did not reach his own door a second too soon. There he had the good fortune to meet his elder brother, who administered to the bully a trouncing which would have been longer but for the arrival of a policeman, but which could not have been stronger while it lasted.

And, left to themselves, Katie and Macgregor dissolved in tears. She was the first to see clearly, and lo! Macgregor, with his broken barrow, his bruised, tear-stained countenance, and his gusty sobs of pain and wrath—Macgregor was still her hero.

"Dinna greet. . . . Never heed," she said, over and over again, in her anxiety to comfort him.

"Ma barra's broke," he groaned.

"Ay, but it's easy mendit. Wull ye no' gang hame to yer maw, noo?"

He shook his head and grieved afresh, though he hated to weep in anybody's, especially in a girl's, presence.

Katie choked, and recovered herself. "Come," she said, gently. "I'll help ye up the stair wi' yer barra, an' I'll tell yer maw how thon muckle sumph set on ye, an' hoo ye lickit him."

"But—but I—I didna lick him."

"Aweel, ye vera near did it. Ye wisna feart, onywey. I ken ye wisna feart."

Her words were balm to his sore spirit. But he was feeling weak and shaky, and it was a while ere the tears ceased.

"Wipe yer e'en on ma pinny," said Katie, at last; and somehow he bowed and obeyed her.

Then together they slowly climbed the stairs, bearing the damaged barrow; and, waiting for the door to open, Katie spoke softly and encouragingly, while Macgregor sniffed violently to keep the tears from flowing afresh. She would fain have kissed her hero, but something forbade her.

THE END

University of California
SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
405 Hilgard Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90024-1388
Return this material to the library
from which it was borrowed.

NON-RENEWABLE

MAY 08 1991

DUE 2 WKS FROM DATE RECEIVED

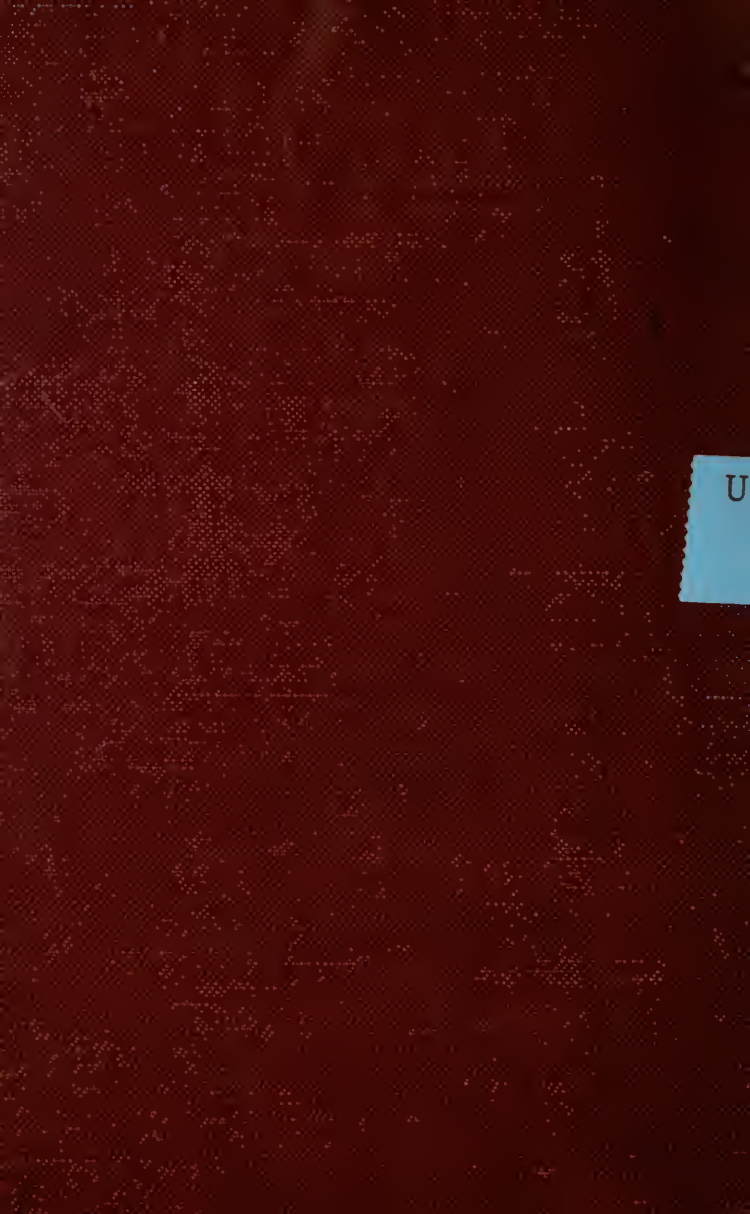
RECD UCSRLF

JUL 08 1991

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
A 000 512 522 4

PR
6003
B406w

ALIFORNIA
RY
-LOS ANGELES



U